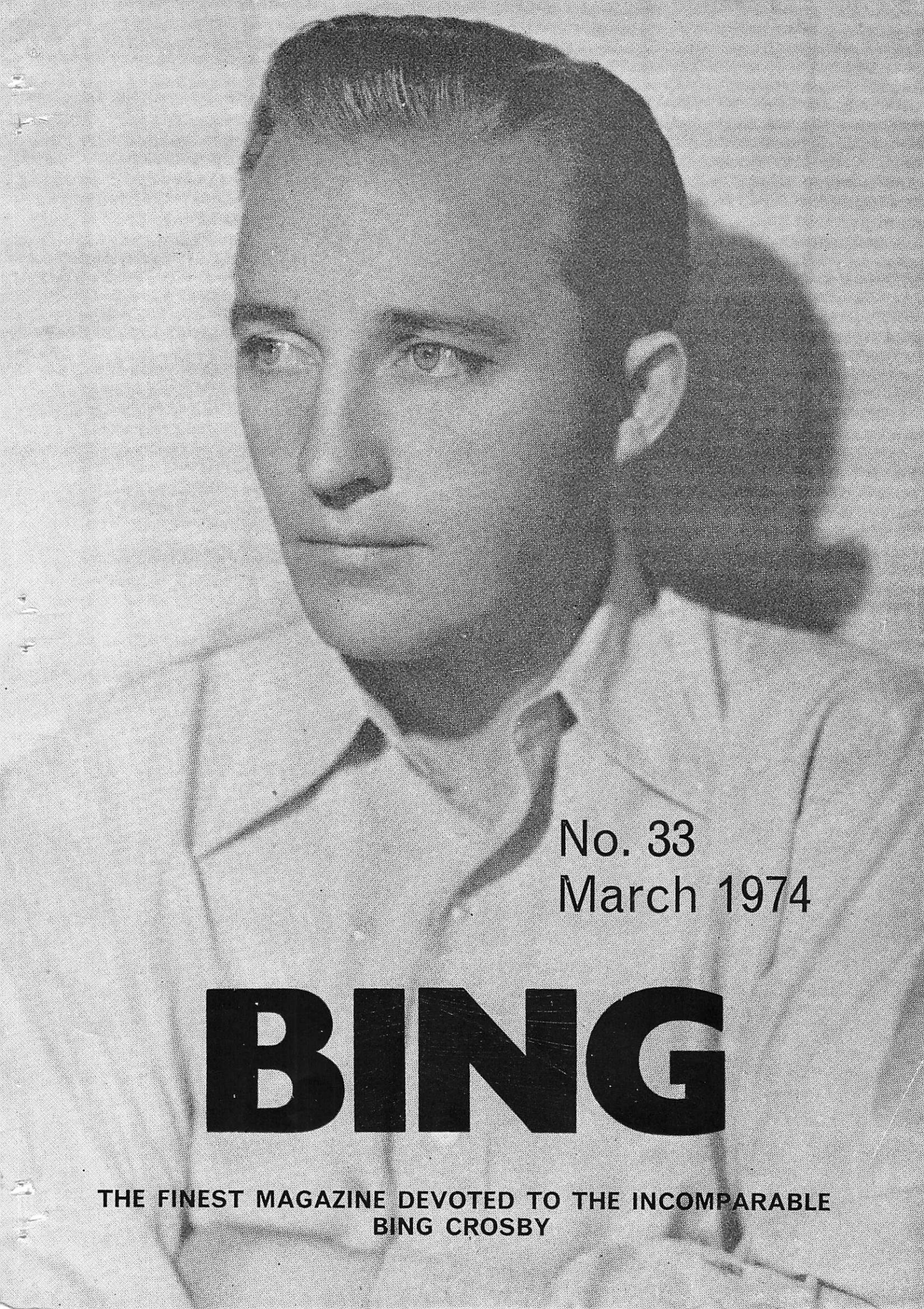

No. 33
March 1974

BING

THE FINEST MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INCOMPARABLE
BING CROSBY

ISSUE 33

BING

MAR. 1974

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BING CROSBY

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"BING"

The ICC's Official Quarterly Magazine

Published: March, June, September and December

Free to registered ICC members

MEMBERSHIP RATES:
UK: £1.30 per annum
USA: 4 dollars
Other countries: UK equivalent

Please make all subscriptions payable to the ICC, and forward to the Secretary, Reg Bristo

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C O N T E N T S "BING" March 74

Cover photograph: An early studio portrait of our handsome crooner!

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EDITORIAL

"Bingville",
72 Stromness Road,
Southend-on-Sea, Essex.

We hope to inject a ray of sunshine into the widespread gloom of 1974 by bringing you our latest issue of "BING"....providing, of course, that a postal strike doesn't prevent us from doing so the moment the envelopes are stuck down!

News of Bing's illness at the beginning of January only helped to contribute to the worries of the day, and there were some dreadful moments when the final curtain threatened to descend. But the 'Old Groaner' pulled through, and whose heart could fail to respond to the news that Bing was singing to patients and nurses after a successful operation. The entire battle (and resulting victory) is recalled on the following three pages with the aid of UK and US newspaper reports that appeared almost daily throughout that anxious period. Congratulations go to Bing from all of us here at the ICC.

It seems so long ago now, but I wish to take this annual opportunity of thanking those of you who kindly sent Christmas cards to "Bingville". My wife and I were most appreciative of your seasonal greetings.

The membership of the ICC continues to grow, the "BING CROSBY LP-OGRAPHY" is selling like hot cakes (have you got yours yet?), and Bing has already made two new recordings for 1974 (see page 7). Perhaps this year can't be so bad after all!

Best Wishes. JOHN BASSETT

Still available....

"THE BING CROSBY LP-OGRAPHY"

The Bing Crosby LP-ography is the first of its kind issued to Crosby collectors anywhere and comprises a representative listing of the majority of Bing's LP releases issued since the early 1950's up until Christmas 1973. All known re-issues and overseas equivalents are shown where applicable and the entire booklet (over 80 pages) is enclosed in an attractive, glossy wrap-round cover. The Introduction to the book has been kindly written by Bing.

The price of this book is £1 (including postage). All orders (with full remittance) should be sent directly to REG BRISTO, 7 Greenmeadow Close, Cwmbran, Monmouthshire, NP4 3NR, England. Please make all cheques, postal orders and IMO's payable to the International Crosby Circle.

The LP-ography will be posted immediately upon receipt of full remittance.....but hurry - stocks are limited!

ROAD TO RECOVERY

(American newspaper clippings appear by courtesy of JIMMY JOHNSON, Jnr.)

BING CROSBY IN HOSPITAL (2nd January)
Bing Crosby was reported in satisfactory condition Tuesday after being hospitalized for treatment of pleurisy, an inflammation of the membrane around the lungs. Crosby entered Peninsula Hospital at Burlingame on Monday. He was reluctant to be hospitalized but agreed at the insistence of his wife, Kathryn, according to family employees. Alan Fisher, the Crosby family butler, said the 72-year-old Crosby had been suffering back and chest pains for several days. "We're hoping he will be home tomorrow or the next day," Fisher said.

SINGER MAY ATTEND HIS TOURNAMENT (3rd January)
Bing Crosby reportedly was still hoping Wednesday that he can make an appearance at his $215,000 invitational golf tournament this week. Crosby was taken to hospital on Monday after complaining of feeling ill for four days at his home in this suburban city of Hillsborough, south of San Francisco. Alan Fisher, the singer's butler, said he visited Crosby in the hospital on Tuesday "and his spirits were high and his colour very good. We're not eliminating the possibility that he'll be able to attend the golf tournament. I don't believe he's missed one yet, and we know he wants to go," said Fisher. Crosby's wife, Kathryn, felt that her husband had "improved considerably". She thought he would be released from the hospital Wednesday night or Thursday. The opening round of the 33rd Bing Crosby Pro-Am golf tournament on Thursday launches the 1974 pro golf tour.

DOCTORS FEAR FOR BING
Bing Crosby's doctors said yesterday that they were "very concerned" about the singer's condition. Doctor Stanley Hanfling said, "There is a possibility of bad news, but I don't want to say anything prematurely." He said the results of tests for a lung disease would not be known for two days. Officially, Bing is suffering from pleurisy, an inflammation of the sac that surrounds the lungs. His butler said yesterday that the singer was "not at death's door by any means." His wife, Kathryn, and children have seen him every day and he has taken a keen interest in the Bing Crosby National Pro-Am golf tournament at Pebble Beach, California, which he missed for the first time in 33 years.

CROSBY IS FEVERISH
Doctors treating Bing Crosby in hospital at San Francisco said yesterday that he was now in a feverish condition, but his cough and chest pains have eased slightly. They said he was still not fully responding to antibiotic treatment for pneumonia.

CROSBY LUNG LESION IS NON-CANCEROUS (10th January)
Doctors for Bing Crosby removed tissue samples from a lung lesion on Wednesday that might be the cause of pneumonia. Tests for cancer were negative. The singer's condition was reported stable and satisfactory. "We feel at present that he has a lung abscess and lesion in the upper part of the left lung," said Dr. Stanley Hanfling, the internist attending Crosby at Peninsula Hospital. Dr. Hanfling said that Crosby underwent a biopsy in which tissue was extracted by a needle from the upper lobe of the left lung. Tests for cancer were negative, the hospital said. Crosby also received X-rays and tests were made of his blood and spitum, results of which were not expected for two days. Doctors also extracted fluid from his left lung to relieve congestion. Dr. Hanfling said the lesion, or sore, is about two inches long and 1½ inches wide. "We don't know what caused it," he said. He said that Crosby had a fever of about 100 degrees and was suffering from a cough and mild-to-moderate chest pains which were being controlled by medication.

SALES TALK
Bing Crosby, who is seriously ill in a San Francisco hospital, has a keen sense of humour which was neatly illustrated in a tale of his from the last annual golf tournament at Pebble Beach, California. It always seems to rain heavily on these occasions, and this time he asked a priest who was standing near him whether he could do anything about it. "No," said the priest, pointing to the watery heavens: "He is management....I am only sales!"

TESTS GO ON FOR CROSBY (12th January)
Bing Crosby will undergo a probe of his left lung to help pin down the cause of a lesion that has failed to respond to treatment. Dr. Hanfling said the bronchoscopy test the singer will undergo is frequently used on patients with lung disease. Crosby is cheerful and walking around talking to other patients with his intravenous tubes following on a rolling pole. Crosby will be anesthetised for the diagnostic procedure in which a flexible probe with a mirror-type device is placed in the windpipe and then moved into the bronchial tubes leading into the lungs. Dr. Hanfling said it is difficult to get the probe into the upper lobe of the lung, but he hopes to be able to do so with special wires and probes. He said he expects the tissue and fluid from the bronchoscopy along with the results of a biopsy last Wednesday to be analysed and used in a final diagnosis of Crosby's ailment.

LUNG SURGERY LIKELY (13th January)
Bing Crosby may undergo surgery to remove from his lung a golf-ball-size abscess, but the crooner's doctor said that a five-man medical team is still baffled at the cause of the illness. "From the beginning this has not been a cut and dried case," said Dr. Hanfling. "Medically, it is an unusual problem." Crosby underwent a bronchoscopy on Saturday. Wires with a light bulb and other devices were inserted through the throat and into the lung where for the second time tissue and fluid were obtained for analysis. Material from a biopsy was being cultured in a laboratory. The results had been expected in two days, but the cells were growing very slowly, and the bacteria or virus causing the problem had not been identified.

CROSBY O.K. AFTER LUNG OPERATION (14th January)
Singer Bing Crosby was in a satisfactory condition after a 3½ hour operation in which two-fifths of his left lung and an abscess the size of a small orange were removed, doctors said. Initial tests on the tissue removed in the operation yesterday indicated the illness was from a rare fungus and not cancer. A team of three surgeons perfcrmed the operation. Crosby is still in the intensive care ward, where he is expected to stay for two or three days. But a spokesman said, "There are no problems. We are optimistic that he will make a quick recovery."

JEAN ROOK's 'DAILY EXPRESS' COLUMN (16th January)
For one very nasty moment there, I thought Bing Crosby had hung up his boater and stuck his pipe in the rack. Some things you just can't do without. So Bing, great old boy, get well soon.

I'M DREAMING OF A T.V. SET, CROONS BING
Bing Crosby was said today to be feeling good and demanding to watch the sports news on television, after a major operation on his lung. He was still in the intensive care unit with wires on his chest. "In fact," said a hospital official, "he's wired for everything except that T.V." The spokesman continued, "Now we've had to give him one!" Doctors said the operation will not affect his ability to sing. "He'll still have the same melodious voice," they said.

CROSBY GETS LETTERS AND CALLS OF CONCERN (16th January)
About 1,000 letters a day have been pouring into the hospital for singer Bing Crosby. Peninsula Hospital officials said Crosby remained in a satisfactory condition yesterday. Only his wife Kathryn and other members of the family are allowed to visit. "All ages have been telephoning him," said chief telephone operator Winnie Ferguson. "They all have two things in common. They all say, 'I remember when....' and they are all concerned." Calls reportedly came from Dorothy Lamour, Bob Hope, Tennesse Ernie Ford and songwriter Irving Berlin, among others. Meanwhile, the U.S. Communicable Disease Centre at Atlanta join Public Health officials and specialists from the University of California in efforts to determine the precise natire of the fungus-like bacteria found in Crosby's lung. Initial testing indicated it may be a rare fungus like those found in African soil.

CROSBY LEAVES INTENSIVE CARE (18th January)
Bing Crosby has moved out of the intensive care unit and is back in his hospital room recovering from lung surgery. He is able to sit up, walk around and eat a soft diet. A spokesman said, "This indicates that he is really progressing very well."

BING LEAVES HOSPITAL (28th January)
Bing Crosby, wearing his hat at a jaunty angle, strolled out of the hospital Sunday after nearly four weeks, and was driven to his suburban home by his wife. Bing, dressed in slacks, sport coat and his traditional soft felt hat, walked into a crisp sunny day, saying that he was taking his family for a holiday. After the operation Crosby visited other patients and sang to nurses and other members of the hospital staff.

DEAR LESLIE.... LARRY CROSBY writes to LESLIE GAYLOR

January 28, 1974

Dear Leslie:

Bing went home from the hospital today, fully recovered.

I anticipate they will be going to their home in Baja Mexico where it is quite warm.

Our secretaries will be quite busy helping him answer a ton of "get well" mail.

Best,
(signed) Larry
Larry Crosby.

P.S. He left with a song for the nurses.

THE "BING" TAPE SERVICE by BOB ROBERTS

Operating in conjunction with the ICC, the "BING" Tape Service provides members with the unique opportunity of acquiring high quality tapes of virtually anything ever sung or spoken by Bing Crosby, whether it be from radio, television, films, records, etc. Strict legal copyright clauses appertain to private tape recording for obvious reasons, but these special facilities are available via the ICC without offence to anyone. Material available includes Woodbury Soap Radio Shows, Kraft Radio Shows, Philco Radio Shows, Chesterfield Shows, General Electric Shows, Hollywood Palace Shows, Bing Crosby Family Shows, Red Cross Radio Shows, AFRS programmes, Voice of America programmes, Cancer Crusades, Command Performances, All Star Reviews, Christmas Sing With Bing, G.I. Journals, Gulf Screen Theatre shows, Here's to Veterans, Pro-Am Golf Tournaments, Mail Call, Music on Deck, U.S. Treasury, "fluffs", "blow-ups", film soundtracks, interviews, film publicity discs, "V"-discs, and hundreds of air-shots from Bing's radio shows and guest shot appearances. All tape supplied is fully guaranteed and recorded dual-track at 3¾ ips, 7½ ips or 15 ips to suit the facilities of each member. Delivery is within one week of receipt of order and payment. For further information about material available, dubbing and postal charges, please send a stamped self-addressed envelope to:-

BOB ROBERTS (ICC Publicity Officer)
56 Thorold Road,
Chatham, KENT.

THE BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY, 1926-1974

Special Announcement

In answer to many enquiries about this proposed publication, we are pleased to announce that mid-1974 will see the appearance of this fully revised and up-dated ICC project. Every commercially issued recording (together with all known unissued and rejected titles) will be shown in strict order of day, month and year, along with matrix/'take' numbers and supplementary information. Announcements of availability will be made in this magazine.

KEEPING TRACK

BERT BISHOP, COLIN PUGH and JOHN BASSETT review the latest record releases.

As usual, thanks go out to members for the information supplied for the continuance of this section of the magazine - the most eagerly perused I would imagine. In this instance most of the information has been provided by Colin Pugh; Fred Reynolds has chipped in with some gen, and all has been collated and forwarded to me by our Editor, John.

****

The most fascinating feature of all this is the news that Bing recorded two new Christmas songs just prior to entering hospital - the dating is in itself worth noting as Bing usually records his Yuletide numbers during the summer months. The actual circumstances of these tracks are, as yet, a mystery, and one can only guess at the explanation of their origination.

The titles of the two songs are "Christmas Star" and "We Love Old St. Mary's", and they are available on an LP, the catalogue number of which is B/J 202 - the LP title is believed to the same as the first of Bing's two songs, namely 'CHRISTMAS STAR'. As they appear to be only obtainable from 'Old St. Mary's Gift Shop', 614 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, California, 94108, USA, there seems every suggestion of a charitable piece of vocalising by Bing for what could be a convent school or church. This is only supposition on my part, but whatever the ins and outs we can only be grateful to the instigators. If you want to try for a copy of the LP that features these songs, write to the address given above. The price of the LP is $5.25 plus postage. It is hoped that copies will be readily available and that when we are in a position to do so the circumstances and the songs will be revealed and reviewed!

********** (STOP PRESS! See also page 24.)

In the previous issue of "BING" a reference was made to a 2-LP set of 'fluffs and bloopers' on which Bing is to be heard with his now famous foul up of "Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams". The LP title is 'PARDON MY BLOOPER' and the number is PMB 3-4. The price, as given in the last edition, is $5 and is available from Stateside sources.

****

Originally only available in the United States Of America, we learn that there is every possibility that the very good collection of a previously issued 2-LP Decca album, 'THE BEST OF BING' (DXSB 7184) will now be released in the UK on the MCA label; indeed it may well have been by the time you read this. Keep an eye on the UK catalogues, it is a nicely enhanced for stereo album featuring 24 tracks of which 10 have been accredited Gold Records for Bing. (See page 58 of "THE BING CROSBY LP-OGRAPHY" for full details).

****

If they haven't all sold by the time you see this magazine, it is worth noting that Dave Carey (of the 'Swing Shop', London) has copies of the US album 'THE UNHEARD BIX' in stock; the catalogie number and label being Broadway 202. There are four tracks by Bing from his Whiteman days, two of which are previously unissued 'takes'. The album was reviewed in the last issue of "BING".

****

Now that CORAL, as such, no longer exist as a branch of DECCA, it is encouraging to know that EMI will be re-running the CORAL releases - so goes the latest information through the 'grapevine'. It is hoped that there will be new collections but without the redoubtable Geoff Milne the outlook is not quite so promising in this respect. CORAL, with seven entirely new collections on LP and four Bing-featured ACE OF HEARTS and BRUNSWICK re-issues to their credit, gave a tremendous shot in the arm to collectors and afficiendos of the 'Old Groaner'; let us fervently hope that this happy trend may continue under the new set up.

****

With obvious rib-tickling intentions a new and possibly pirate record company having the quaintly risible label title, 'HO-HO-HO RECORDS', has

come up with a couple of Christmas radio programmes, neither of which fall into the humorous category but do feature two fascinating Bing-starring shows. On an LP, catalogue number 1088, and entitled 'A WARM AND WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS EVE WITH BING AND FRANK' there is the doubly delectable backing:

Side One: The LP title programme, which is a Frank Sinatra show, with Bing-featured songs only listed here:

Happy holiday	Bing and Frank
Jingle bells	Bing and Frank
Deck the halls	Chorus. Bing & Frank in back-
God rest ye merry, gentlemen	" ground
Hark the Herald Angels sing	"
O, come all ye faithful	"
Away in a manger	Bing
O little town of Bethlehem	Bing and Frank
Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer	Bing
The Christmas song	Bing and Frank
White Christmas	Bing and Frank

Side Two: THE CROSBY CLAN
Bing, Dixie Lee Crosby and Family in a Christmas show:

O, come all ye faithful	Bing
Jingle bells	Bing and Gary
Sketch on 'Father Christmas'	All the family
That Christmas feeling	Bing and Gary
I'd like to hitch a ride with Santa Claus	Bing and Lindsay
That Christmas feeling	Bing and boys
Silent night	Bing

The Crosby boys are also heard to be singing "The Snowman", but this number doesn't feature 'Dad'.

Even if these programmes are available to you on tape, the LP would still make a wonderful addition to your Christmas with Bing section of your record collections. With regards to availability, one can only assume that this is of Stateside origin and should be tracked down through the usual channels. Most members are pretty resourceful in this respect but if any difficulty arises the best bet for UK residents is any of the HARLEQUIN RECORD SHOPS; addresses of which have already been given in back issues of the magazine.

****

Yet another brace of radio shows appears on yet another new label! This time 'FRANCES ETHEL GUMM - HARRY LILLIS CROSBY' on LEGEND WM 1973.

The name of the latter artiste will pose no problems but the lady involved is more widely known under her stage name, Judy Garland, rather than by her family surname and given Christian names. All the tracks are 'air-shots' dating from 1950-51.

Side One:

Punch and Judy	Bing and Judy
I like you just the way you are	Bing and Judy
Hello, ma baby)	
In my merry oldsmobile)	
Call me up some rainy afternoon)	medley. Bing and Judy
Walking my baby back home)	
In my merry oldsmobile (reprise))	
How could you believe me when I said I loved you when you know I've been a liar all my life	Bing and Judy
" " " " (reprise)	Bing and Judy

Side Two:

You're just in love	Bing and Judy
Tortured)	Bing (solo)
Boise Idaho)	
My blue, blue boy) medley.	Bing and Judy
These lush moments)	

Bon voyage, Judy) Limehouse blues) April in Paris) Isle of Capri)	medley.	Bing and Judy

Again the question of availability arises and we can only reiterate the comments relating to the 'HO-HO-HO RECORDS' LP; but we understand that the quality is very, very good, which indeed it should be from such a late era. If it is anything like the TOTEM Philco Radio Show albums (reviewed in the last "BING") then it is certainly worth acquiring. Some of the songs are just enough off the beaten track to avoid being 'just another version' of Bing's standards, thereby offering an even further incentive to shake out a few more shekels from the old piggy-bank! Not able to say just how much either of the foregoing LP's cost, but will probably originate over the counter at around $5.75. Postage must be borne in mind, therefore.

****

Not previously reported in "BING" is the LP 'EDDIE CONDON'S WORLD OF JAZZ' on CBS (S)67273. It features one Bing track: "Stay On The Right Side Of The Road", which we believe is a previously unissued 'take' (can anyone confirm?). Cut in 1933 with the Dorsey Brothers Orchestra one can only assume that the recently deceased jazz musician of the LP title was a member of that orchestra at the time.

****

Whatever the amount of leg being shown by girls' fashions in 1973, the 'midi' found its way to the foreground as far as record collectors were concerned in the shape of a German LP label called (wait for it!) 'MIDI'. The album with the aforementioned label which caught our attention in December is entitled 'WHITE CHRISTMAS' (MID 24 014) and is, in fact, a re-issue of the Reprise LP, '12 SONGS OF CHRISTMAS' featuring Bing, Frank Sinatra and Fred Waring. The cover is most attractive, showing an illuminated church at night surrounded by snow-capped mountains. A similar idea was used for the Reprise album but in this reviewer's opinion the 'MIDI' cover scene is far superior, both in layout and photography. Bing's contribution to this festive musical collection can be found on page 74 of the LP-OGRAPHY (under 'Reprise'). We suggest that you try writing to HARLEQUIN for this one.

****

Among a few LP's that have escaped our attention insofar as reviews are concerned are the FAMILY SFR-DP 715 (Italian) issue called 'HARLEM SPEAKS', on which Bing may be heard vocalising on the Duke Ellington accompanied version of "St.Louis Blues". Previous experience of the reproduction quality of 'FAMILY' records may cause some readers to shy away from this disc although the fidelity and availability in this instance may be excellent in both respects.

****

Earlier reference to the 'BEST OF BING' album also calls to mind that a mini 7-inch microgroove version of this is also available in stereo on DECCA 7-34874. Titles as follows:

Side One:	Dear hearts and gentle people
	Don't fence me in
	Sam's song
Side Two:	Galway Bay
	McNamara's band
	Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral

In view of the fact that this disc plays at 33-and-a-third rpm, it rates as an LP, and originates from the good old USA.

****

Also from the 'New Continent' comes the 12" 'BING & HOPPY' (Hoppalong Cassidy, of course!) on CRITTER label, CBHC-8901. The label bears all the hallmarks of 'Amalgamated Records'. From CHESTERFIELD SHOWS: 13th Dec.1950 on

one side and the 4th March 1951 on the reverse side. Quality of reproduction fully justifies the description 'first class'. As most of the tapes of the Chesterfield shows originate from transcription discs, it can be assumed that this LP was dubbed from a similar source.

****

A few years ago a limited number of copies of 'THE JAZZIN' BING CROSBY' (Italian 'JOKER' label) were brought into this country and sold at exceptionally high prices. Your Editor was one of the 'fortunate few' who paid a very large sum of money to obtain one of these discs but now I wish I had saved my cash. The album has recently appeared in the shops at the ridiculous price of 94 pence, and you can well imagine my annoyance at this discovery....what I had to say about it was fit only for the ears of a certain collector/supplier who shall remain nameless!

The record is identical in content to the German 'HISTORIA' issue of the same name and the cover is virtually a repeat of that issue, except for a change in colour from red to dark blue and the omission of one small photograph, top left. The contents can be found detailed on page 63 of the LP-OGRAPHY, and south-east members are advised to try their branch of 'GUY NORRIS RECORD SHOPS' for this one.

****

The following new releases have not been received at the time of 'going to press' and therefore we are unable to review them as comprehensively as we would wish. However, as much information as possible is presented below, together with prices and sources of availability where known. Members will appreciate that additional releases are likely to appear during the time the magazine is being printed and posted (usually about seven days). However, new releases, if any, which miss the deadline will be dealt with in our June edition of "BING".

TOTEM LP 1007 'BING & AL'
Side One: The Bing Crosby Show, 28 December 1949
Side Two: The Bing Crosby Show, 4 January 1950

TOTEM LP 1008 'BING CROSBY ON THE AIR'
Side One: The Woodbury Soap Radio Show, 18 September 1934
Side Two: Kraft Music Hall selections:
On the sentimental side (31.3.38)
I simply adore you (24.3.38)
Smiles (7.10.37)
Remember me (7.10.37)
Cremo Cigars selections:
Guilty (7.11.31)
Kissable baby (7.11.31)
I cried for you (7.11.31)
As time goes by (6.12.31)

Both TOTEM albums available from: RECORDS & TAPES, P.O. Box 724, Redmond, Washington, 98052, USA.

STAR-TONE ST-213 'JUDY AND HER PARTNERS IN RHYTHM AND RHYME'
Maybe it's because (radio 'air-shot' - Bing and Judy duet)

STAR-TONE ST-215 'ACADEMY AWARD WINNERS ON THE AIR'
(a) Bing winning Academy Award
(b) "Ragtime Cowboy Joe" (radio 'air-shot' - Bing and Clark Gable duet, 1937)
(c) "A little bird told me" (radio 'air-shot' - Hattie McDaniels vocal with Bing joining in on a couple of phrases only, 1949)

FAMILY SFR-DP 660 'PAUL WHITEMAN ORCHESTRA - 1928'
Contents unknown, but there is a possibility that Bing is on this album.

JOKER SM 3278 'THE GREAT VOCALISTS'
Contents unknown, but we know that at least one track features Bing. Available at good record shops for 94 pence.

CELLULOID CROSBY

by KEITH PARKINSON

It is no easy task to compile a complete listing of anything relating to Bing. His output has been so prolific that something is turning up all the time that has been overlooked, forgotten or, in some cases, hidden. Last year the magazine 'FOCUS ON FILM' published a Leo McCarey Filmography and a couple of issues after its appearance along came the following letter from Alvin H. Marill of Glen Rock, New Jersey:

> "Add to your Leo McCarey Filmography, 'YOU CAN CHANGE THE WORLD' (1951), a 20 minute film made for the Christophers. McCarey directed, William Perlberg produced, cast included Loretta Young, Irene Dunne, Jack Benny, William Holden, Ann Blyth, Paul Douglas, Bing Crosby, Bob Hope and Rochester."

It would be wrong to dismiss Mr. Marill's find because he published a Bing Crosby Filmography in the June/July 1968 issue of 'FILMS IN REVIEW' which was the most accurate and complete listing of Bing's films at that time. He is a respected authority on the cinema hence his current project, "The Films Of Anthony Quinn" to be published by the Citadel Press. Can any reader tell us more about 'YOU CAN CHANGE THE WORLD'?

"As soon as the current film musical craze has petered out - it is just about washed up right now - I'm through. One more picture perhaps and then I'm going to settle down on a Californian ranch and see how much enjoyment a lazy man can find in sensible leisurely living". Bing Crosby, August 1934. Pick up an old film magazine and you realise that film personalities either leave everything to their publicists or depend on their horoscopes when they plan their lives. The lazy man settling down on a ranch sounds typically Bing but on the 10th August 1934 he began filming 'HERE IS MY HEART' at Paramount and managed an average of two films a year for the next 30 years.

In between times Bing was either in the recording studio or taking part in a radio broadcast. David Niven relates an experience when he appeared as Bing's guest on the Kraft Music Hall. It was at a time when Niven was on suspensions from his studio, MGM. Although technically Goldwyn was entitled to everything Niven earned, it had been agreed that he should only receive half of the earnings from radio broadcasts. As was customary on the KMH, Niven was presented with a hamper of cheeses, spreads and sardines. Half the spread was removed from the jars, every cheese and sardine was cut in half and then with an envelope for half his salary from the show he sent the lot to Goldwyn inside half the basket. The KMH episode is one of many amusing incidents recounted in Niven's autobiography, "The Moon Is A Balloon" (Coronet, 40p). The book was the best selling paperback of 1973 and healthy sales continue this year. It also happens to be an amusing account of an expelled public schoolboy who became a Hollywood success and led a chequered career which must answer the prayers of every film publicist. If you haven't read the book yet then buy a copy now - satisfaction guaranteed.

Although "Movies On Television" by Angela and Elkan Allan (Times Newspapers Limited, £1.25) only lists about half the number of films in Steven H. Sceeur's American paperback "Movies On TV" it takes films a little more seriously and tends to be more severe in most cases. On the whole, Bing's films are not as highly rated although a comparison of two consecutive entries in both publications shows that Scheuer and the Allans have similar tastes. Scheuer rates 'HIGH SOCIETY' as good - "....with a Stellar cast and a Cole Porter score, it should have been better than it is, but somehow it lacks the sparkle of the original. Nevertheless, pleasant fun". The Allans urge, "Catch it if you can". Scheuer also rates 'HIGH TIME' as good, going on to say "....episodic comedy starts excellently but wears thin before the conclusion. Generally good fun". The Allans say "....view it if you've nothing better to do; a pleasant trifle about middle aged B.C. enrolling in college and giving the young a lesson in how to enjoy themselves....the songs aren't much cop, however". But criticism is all a con, folks. The Allans review at least four films twice under their American and English titles and rate them differently in each case.

Going back to 'HIGH SOCIETY' for a minute, why must writers insist on comparing it to 'THE PHILADELPHIA STORY'. To compare a screen musical to a filmed play made 16 years earlier is like saying cricket is not as good a game as football because it's a slower game. Can I also confess to finding 'THE PHILADELPHIA STORY' a slight bore, anyhow?

One of the most baffling statements in this or any other magazine can be found in my article in the last issue when I stated that 'GOING MY WAY' was awarded seven Oscars and then proceeded to list six. The seventh went to Leo McCarey as Best Director. Similar mistakes should not occur because my wife has now hidden the whisky bottle.

The December 1973 issue of "Playboy" carried an interview with Bob Hope. There would be something seriously amiss if Bob did not mention Bing and of course he found it impossible to keep Crosby out of the conversation. Here's a sample:

Hope: Bing was from a very poor Catholic family and Frank Sinatra was from a very poor Italian family. In what other country in the world could a meatball and a piece of spaghetti command so much bread?

Playboy: When did you buy all that Real Estate?

Hope: Oh, I've been buying since 1949. Crosby and I struck oil down in Texas back in the forties. It was a big strike; we had a lot of wells and we made a good capital gain on it. To Crosby, it wouldn't have made any difference if he'd struck orange juice. He's been living on "White Christmas" for 20 years.

Playboy: What about sex? Is there sex after 60?

Hope: You bet. And awfully good, too. Especially the one in the Fall.

Sex is the tenuous connection between "Playboy" and "Andy Warhol's Interview". Both are monthly magazines printed in the USA. But they treat their sex rather differently. "Interview" is primarily obsessed with sex of an unusual nature and is concerned with the twilight world of pornography and the latest blue movie queens (and you may interpret "Queens" as you wish and still be correct). The magazine's involvement with music is an interest in American contemporary folk, rock and soul, so the lesbian antics of Janice Joplin, who died of an overdose of heroin, is one of a number of similar articles. Surprise, then, to find that page 16 of the September 1973 issue contains a full page photograph of Bing Crosby and that a lengthy Crosby interview with Rosemary Kent is the one article in the magazine that does not contain a sprinkling of four letter words. A similar experience would be going to see "LAST TANGO IN PARIS" and finding that the projectionist had made a mistake and that a Bugs Bunny cartoon replaced the third reel. The interview by Rosemary Kent reveals no surprises but some of Bing's more interesting quotes about Hollywood and family life follow:

"There's really a dearth of productions in Hollywood now. That's why everyone seems to be going back and repeating themselves. It's really a tough racket these days out there. There used to be a star system in Hollywood but not anymore. Nowadays the trend is to go out shopping for a director instead of a star. I noticed three or four ads, at least, in this morning's Times which had the director's name printed bigger than any of the cast. In fact, in one ad there wasn't even a mention of an actor or actress! It seems that directors have become bigger than the stars today. Very strange.

"Kathy and Mary Frances are in Mexico City currently checking up on ballet companies there. It seems our daughter if a balleto-maine and now wants to study it seriously. Mexico City was highly recommended to us, what with its Ballet Folklorico Company, as a good place for her to study. Personally, we all love Mexico very much. If I were a young man today, I think that's where I'd invest my money - in Mexican Real Estate."

The 'NEW YORK EXPERIENCE' is Bing's latest financial venture. It is the

third Crosby promoted film to open which makes use of a digital computer co-ordinating multi-screens, quadraphonic sound and intricate lighting. San Francisco and Hawaii have been settings for previous "Experiences" and I hope London is not too far down the list of further subjects. (Bing Crosby's 'BRIGHOUSE EXPERIENCE' really is expecting too much!) In a Press Conference given at the time of the opening of the New York film, Bing had this to say:-

> "My latest venture happens to be 'THE NEW YORK EXPERIENCE', a multi-sensory screen entertainment which depicts New York's past and present story. And believe me, it's a fascinating one. No I don't sing in it nor do I do any voice overs. The only thing I had to do with the project was work on the production end. I am the producer, I put in the money. You know, when it opens this month, it'll be the first major attraction to open in Radio City Music Hall in more than 40 years. And I'm convinced that it'll be a smash.
> "Why am I making one on New York City? We found New York to be ready for such a film. It's not just intended or aimed at tourists, though. It's even for people who've lived here all their lives. The film really doesn't try to make any points. It's more of a realistic attempt to tell the fascinating story of New York City. Furthermore, it's just good entertainment, which is what a lot of people want these days. We really didn't have time to get into the bad things when we filmed, which is good I suppose. We weren't trying to make order out of chaos.
> "I always like to come to New York City. I rarely get here. Sometimes on our way through to Europe we'll stop. It's so elevating and stimulating. I thought this time I'd see a couple of shows, go play some golf somewhere out on the Island, and maybe go to the races. However I've been watching a lot of TV and I can't make heads or tails of this Watergate thing."

I hope Bing's N.Y. film is as successful as its two predecessors, but it would have been a publicity boost, I'm sure, if Bing had been the film's narrator.

You can't keep a good man down, even if Bing's total contribution to a movie is a one line cameo in Bob Hope's latest release; 'CANCEL MY RESERVATION' was made more than a year ago in the USA and has been distributed in this country by MGM-EMI. As one would expect of a Hope comedy, the film censor has given the film a 'V' Certificate which is something of a novelty these days anyhow. In crossing the Atlantic the film has lost 13 minutes and at 86 minutes fits comfortably at the bottom of a double bill. In the North of England it played some locations with 'FOR LOVE OF ADA' and, although the films have a little in common, a more adventurous coupling, say with a Woody Allen comedy, would have given it the attention of a more receptive audience.

Hope's comedies over the last few years have not been exceptional and the type of humour usually found in that comedian's films has gone out of vogue in the 1970s. For this reason I suspect the distributors did not feel it wise to spend any money publicising the film in the UK.

The storyline is based on the novel "The Broken Gun" by Louis L'Amour, a respected writer of westerns. In the film Bob is married to Eva Marie Saint and both appear in Bob's television talk show. Jealous of his wife's success in the show, Bob retreats to his Phoenix ranch where he discovers the corpse of a local indian girl and is arrested for murder. Bob clears himself and then sets out to track down the real killer. Here the plot becomes involved as Bob is befriended by a 110-year-old indian mystic, pursued by a hellicopter and prevents one of the villians of the piece, Forrest Tucker, from drowning. The whole affair is satisfactorily wrapped up when a hidden map is discovered which solves all and results in Bob and wife returning to New York after agreeing to make Bob's show a family affair. And Bing's contribution? A brief glimpse in a dream sequence in which Hope imagines he is being lynched. You have to be an ardent Bing follower to part with 60 pence for the ten seconds of screentime alloted Mr.C.

Bob Hope was executive producer of the film so there's no excuse when it

doesn't rise above the level of, say, 'I'LL TAKE SWEDEN'. One reviewer, John Gillett, had this to say about the film:-

> "A half-hearted attempt to rekindle the mood of those Paramount chase comedies of the forties, with Bob Hope repeating his familiar role of the innocent bumbler caught up in a spiral of thefts and murders. But with rather fumbling direction (aggravated no doubt by severe cuts made for distribution here) the film only fitfully comes to life in one or two typical Hope asides and in the lynching dream sequence."

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THE OFFICIAL ICC TAPE: A special collection of Bing's personal messages to the International Crosby Circle, available on tape from the Editor, price 90 pence (including postage and packing). Tape is recorded dual-track at 3¾ i.p.s, although cassettes can be supplied by special arrangement. For further information, refer to the previous edition of "BING" magazine.

JOHN CARTER presents THE CELEBRATED COLLECTORS' BAZAAR - 24 March 1974. Five great bazaars, all on one floor, covering the following collecting subjects....

MILITARIA - medals, badges, uniforms, books, models, miniatures, weapons, etc.
VINTAGE RECORDS, plus PHONOGRAPHS and HORN GRAMOPHONES - Jazz, Dance, Swing, Blues, Personality, Opera, Classical, Crosby, Bowlly, Organs, Pathes, etc.
VINTAGE POSTCARDS - all types of postcard, postal history, postcard albums and miscellaneous ephemera and books, etc.
VINTAGE TOYS - tinplate, diecast, aircraft, boats, dolls, books, etc.
TRANSPORT RELICS or an AUTOJUMBLE - old motor spares, lamps, mascots, books, aircraft items, railwayana, etc.

ALEXANDRA PALACE (THE PALM COURT), WOOD GREEN, LONDON, N.22.
Refreshments available. Doors open at 1 p.m. Admission 30 pence.

YOUR EDITOR WILL BE ATTENDING THIS EVENT ... LOOK FOR THE ICC CLUB TIE!

TAPE CROSBY

by FRED REYNOLDS

69 Heathmere Avenue,
Yardley, Birmingham.

Not to be confused with the much-acclaimed "BING" Tape Service operated by Bob Roberts and detailed on page 6 of this issue, the "TAPE CROSBY" operates as an independent feature of this magazine.

It consists of a frequently changing taped 'programme' of Crosbyana which circulates regularly amongst a limited number of ICC members.

Interested members are advised that there is a waiting list at the time of 'going to press' but when vacancies occur an announcement will be made in this magazine.

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R.S.V.P. Anyone interested in vintage 78's should not fail to see "R.S.V.P." which always contains auctions and sales, listings and articles of interest. Write to: PETER SEAGO, 5 TOLLET STREET, STEPNEY GREEN, LONDON, E.1. (Please mention "BING" magazine when writing!)

GOLDEN YEARS: Edited by the ICC's very own REG BRISTO, this magazine is considered by many to be the finest in its field. Each quarterly issue covers every aspect of the 'Golden Era' of dance bands. Write to Reg for further information - or send 25 pence for a sample copy!

CROSBYOGRAPHY Discographical Research.

YOU DO HAVE TO KNOW THE LANGUAGE ... insists COLIN PUGH

Every hobby has its own 'language' and there is no exception when it comes to the hobby of collecting Gramophone Records. The life of a collector today is frequently beset by such terms as:

Commercial Issues; Non-Commercial Issues; Special Issues; Private Issues; Pirate Issues; Limited Editions; Test Pressings; Publicity Discs; Radio Transcriptions; Charity Discs; Appeal Discs; V-Discs; and Discs for almost every specialised application including Recruiting Songs; Patriotic Songs; Rally Songs; Salvage Songs; Tribute Songs; and Savings Songs.

In spite of this complexity of terms applied today by collectors to describe the various types of recordings they have acquired, basically they may be divided into two main sections - "Commercial" and "Non-Commercial". These two headings are not always easy to define but the following breakdown may be of some assistance in collecting, identifying, filing, cataloguing and general discographical work.

COMMERCIAL ISSUES (Limited Editions; Pirate Issues)
A Commercial Record is one that is offered to and may be purchased by the general public.
Limited Edition: This is a record produced in one small limited quantity with no intention to re-press or reissue at a later date. Some commercial records were "Limited Editions" - e.g. L 3746 "Why Do I Like You". One thousand copies were pressed and they sold for five dollars each.
Pirate Issues: This is a record made from copyright material without permission of the owners.
Some Pirate Issues are produced for commercial gain and are therefore commercial records - e.g. Amalgamated; Family; Jazum; Star-Tone, etc. Most of these also come under the heading of "Limited Editions".

NON-COMMERCIAL ISSUES (Special Issues; Private Issues)
These are recordings not intended for retailing and not for sale to the general public.
Special Issues: These are records produced for 'special' or 'specific' purposes and examples are: Test Pressings; Publicity Discs; Radio Transcriptions; V-Discs, etc.
Private Issues: A 'Private' recording is one produced for: (a) one's own use (b) distribution among one's friends and acquaintances (c) distribution to members of private Clubs and Societies. As such, their production is not primarily motivated by gain. With very few exceptions such as messages, interviews, etc., private issues are made from commercial material and are therefore Pirate Issues. At this point we have to understand it is the 'material' that is commercial and not the 'record'. A private issue is also a limited edition.

SUMMARY:	COMMERCIAL	
	Normal retail outlets	(all)
	Limited Editions	(some)
	Pirate Issues	(some)
	NON-COMMERCIAL	
	Special Issues	(all)
	Private Issues	(all)

If the above statements and definitions or something produced on these lines, could become accepted internationally, this would greatly assist discographers in general and offer a better system of filing to collectors.

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DICK CASSIDY (Southampton) writes: In the sleeve notes to the CBS 2-LP set "BING CROSBY IN HOLLYWOOD" we're told that Bing made 'several selections' at his recording debut in 1926. Apart from "I've Got The Girl", can you tell

me anything about the other sides which were supposedly waxed?

EDITOR's comment:
The following titles were all recorded by Don Clark and his Hotel Biltmore Orchestra on 18th October, 1926 but (to date) only the last two tracks are known to contain Bing vocals. "Idolizing", of course, was non-Bing.

W142782 Just One Little Kiss
W142783 When You Waltz With The One You Love
*W142784 Idolizing
*W142785 I've Got The Girl
W142786 Don't Somebody Need Somebody (unissued)

*issued on UK Columbia 4310, and US Columbia 824-D.

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JIM DAVIS (London) writes: Endeavouring to tidy up my tape collection, I've discovered a dubbing of Bing singing "Deep In A Dream Of You". It lasts for a few moments only and sounds very much like an early 30's recording. According to contemporary reference books, it's not from a film, although I would have thought it may have been used in a Mack Sennett 'short'. Can you throw any light on the matter?

EDITOR's comment:
I can find no reference to the song anywhere, Jim, but perhaps our publicity officer Bob Roberts can come up with something....how about it, Bob?

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BING'S DECCA MASTERS ... an analysis by KEN GRAY

Following up our analysis in "BING"-31 of the Columbia and Brunswick masters of Bing Crosby that have never been reissued on microgroove, the following is the first step in a similar analysis of Bing's Decca (MCA) masters from 1934 to the present. Below are listed the titles of every 'master' that was commercially issued on 78 rpm somewhere, but which has not since appeared on an unbreakable microgroove disc anywhere. Excluded from this list are alternate takes and masters like "Spring Fever" that have never been commercially issued at all. Included are different masters or versions of songs that were re-recorded, where the earlier version never appeared on LP (for example, "White Christmas").

My interest in breaking down these masters in terms of what has or has not been on microgroove is as follows:

1. This gives the record companies (particularly the English company which is taking over the MCA license) an indication of what, from a collector's viewpoint, should be re-issued first.
2. It indicates this writer's concern that as many of Bing's records as possible (hopefully all) will be released on microgroove for historical purposes as soon as possible. Microgroove recordings (comprising 45s, 45-EPs, and 7, 10 and 12 inch LPs) are in this writer's definition unbreakable and therefore historically more durable. Furthermore, they are better quality recordings and also, of course, more easily stored.

We'll examine alternate takes next time since there are many Decca alternates that have only appeared on 78 rpm discs. All corrections will be welcome. Now to the list of Decca masters never before re-issued on microgroove:

Two cigarettes in the dark
Maybe I'm wrong again
Silent night (DLA 97A)
Adeste fideles/Lift up your hearts/ Stabat mater (B 2078-A)
Adeste fideles (DLA 256)
Silent night (DLA 261)
Robins and roses
I have so little to give
Just one word of consolation
Pennies from heaven (medley) (So do I)
Never in a million years
What will I tell my heart?
Sentimental and melancholy
What is love?
Can I forget you?
When the mighty organ played 'O promise me'
Let's waltz for old time's sake
In the mission by the sea
Home on the range (DLA 1153)
When mother nature sings her lullaby
Now it can be told
The lonesome road

(Contd. over)

Just a kid named Joe
It's a lonely trail
Let's tie the old forget me not
Poor old rover
Just one more chance (DLA 1773)
Neighbours in the sky
Cynthia
The girl with the pigtails in her hair
Devil may care
Can't get Indiana off my mind
You are the one
Lone star trail
I'd know you anywhere
A nightingale sang in Berkeley Square
Chapel in the valley
Who calls?
'Till reveille
Don't break the spell
Ol' man river (DLA 2538)
Let's all meet at my house
Humpty Dumpty heart
Whistler's mother-in-law
Shepherd serenade
I'm thinking tonight of my blue eyes
Mandy is two
Skylark
Lamplighter's serenade
Blue shadows and white gardenias
Blues in the night (DLA 2857)
Just plain lonesome
White Christmas (DLA 3009)
Bombardier song
Silent night (L 3026)
Conchita, Lolita ... Lopez
Road to Morocco (L 3030)
A boy in khaki
By the light of the silvery moon
But not for me
Hello mom
Like someone in love
*Hot time in the town of Berlin
Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral (L 3456)
Moonlight on a white picket fence
Iowa
Sleigh ride in July
A friend of yours
Dear friend
My baby said yes
Your socks don't match
**Evelina (W 72427)
The eagle and me (W 72428)
Strange music
More and more
All of my life
Why do I like you?
Early American (L 3749)
Connecticut
If I loved you (L 3801)
Whose dream are you?
Save your sorrow
That little dream got nowhere
Give me the simple life
I've found a new baby
Day by day
Prove it by the things you do
Just my luck
You may not love me
Oh, but I do
Gotta get me somebody to love (L 4184)
Lullaby (Jocelyn)
Where my caravan has rested
The things we did last summer
So much in love
My heart goes crazy
So would I
That's how much I love you
Rose of Santa Rosa
Gotta get me somebody to love (L 4355)
What am I gonna do about you?
I do, do, do like you
Kokomo, Indiana
The old chaperone
You do
Suspense
Pass that peacepipe
Ain't doin' bad doin' nothin'
Ida, I do
Laroo, laroo lilli bolero
The story of Sorrento
Katrina
Lilli Marlene
Haunted heart
A fella with an umbrella
A bluebird singing in my heart
***Why can't you behave?
How it lies, how it lies, how it lies
Everywhere you go
Be-bop spoken here
You're wonderful
Sorry
The four winds and the seven seas
Make believe (You are glad....)
It's more fun than a picnic
Bibbidi-bobbidi-boo
Top of the morning (spoken intros.)
(TNY-1386-TI)

Notes:
*"Hot time in the town of Berlin" was issued on an unbreakable V-Disc (V-D 337-A Army)
**"Evelina" (W 72579) was issued on microgroove, and is apparently a dubbing of W 72427.
***"Why can't you behave?" was issued on an unbreakable Decca 78 record (De 24559) which I have in my own collection.
"Angels of mercy" (DLA 2842-A) was issued on a limited issue US 2-LP set 'BING CROSBY - FOR COLLECTORS ONLY' and is therefore not included above.

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BING ON THE BOX

BERT BISHOP reviews the TV and Radio items featuring Bing Crosby since Christmas 1973

Thanks to the industrial shinnanegins, poor old Bing sure took a battering on the box at Christmas-time, and the three rolls of film that I had lined up for a pictorial record of the promised programmes that never transpired remain, therefore, unexposed. Out went the 'PARKINSON' repeat; 'LITTLE BOY LOST' has remained indefinately absent, and 'A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT' appeared about as fleetingly as a fog-bound Cornish pixie - the victim of a voltage drop!

For the dedicated few who were able to cast aside the Christmas morning capers, keep well clear of the kitchen and avoid the attentions of annual aunts and other sundry, seasonal visiting relatives there was, at least, 'WHITE CHRISTMAS' coming through loud and clear. Regrettably, insofar as viewing this film was concerned, I was caught up in the web of Yuletide festivities - so, the 'box' in my house remained dark and silent on Christmas morn. Most members will have seen this film so many times that they probably mime along with both the songs and the dialogue in much the same way that Bing and Danny Kaye handled the comical "Sisters" cabaret number. Still, it's a great film and I for one hope that it will crop up at Christmas for many years to come. It went out on BBC-2 at 11.35 a.m. and as I read the Radio Times critique, Philip Jenkinson, I am somewhat bemused by his comment: 'I'd like to see the 'A Crooner, A Comic' routine, missing from all but two prints'. He's a bit off beam with that remark because the fact is that the routine began life as 'A Singer, A Dancer', but after, first Fred Astaire, then Donald O'Connor took ill and Danny Kaye came in to partner Bing in the film, the song was re-written by Irving Berlin under the title mentioned, However, the routine was omitted from the film entirely.

It will interest readers to know that "WHITE CHRISTMAS' was televised twice in the States during the holiday - at 7.30 p.m. on December 22nd, and 2.30 p.m. on the following day! This information appears by courtesy of 'Wig' Wiggins, Jnr. who kindly sent over a clipping from the "Washington Star-News", published in Washington D.C.

Saturday, 28th December - 3.00 p.m. on BBC-2 - saw the presentation of the Mark Twain classic, 'A Yankee At The Court Of King Arthur', under its Paramount Production screen title. The story unfolds by way of a first person flash-back as told to the Lord Pendragon (Sir Cedric Hardwicke) during a visit to an English castle in the year 1912 by one Hank Martin (Bing), an American who had been a blacksmith in Hartford, Connecticut before the arrival of the motor-car had put him out of business. Prior to being summoned before Lord Pendragon, Hank had been wandering round the castle banqueting hall with other visitors and interupting the guide's comments with knowledgeable and sometimes contradictory statements concerning the history of the family's long departed forebears. "Over 'ere, ladies and gentlemen, we 'ave a hauberk", indicates the guide, "Dating from the sixth cebtury and said to have been worn by Sir Logris of Astrolat. Kindly notice the round 'ole through the breast-plate; undoubtably caused by an iron tipped arrow of the period."

"Uh, uh", murmurs Hank, shaking his head. "That happens to be a bullet hole". The visitors ridicule his statement and the guide draws the tour to its conclusion. Hank is requested to visit Lord Pendragon who is in his chambers abed with a nasty cold. Curious as to how the American gentleman should know so much about his ancient forebears his lordship asks Hank to explain. He shows the Lord Pendragon a gold amulet which is identical to the one in a painting of the Lady Alisande: "Dead these thirteen 'undred years", as the guide had exclaimed. "A remarkable duplicate", observes his lordship. "Not a duplicate, Sir....she gave it to me". "Young man, you are either a liar or a lunatic...." begins his lordship, but Hank settles him back on his pillows telling him: "I've been wanting to get this off my chest for a long time".

He begins his tale and when first seen after the flashback fade is tinkering under a 1905 motor carriage of his contrivance, surrounded by a group of youngsters with whom he sings "If You Stub Your Toe On The Moon". Obliged

to return a freshly shod horse, Tex, to its owner he hurries off in the van of a menacing thunderstorm; there comes a crack of thunder and Hank is unseated from his mount and is knocked out at the foot of a large elm tree. He is stirred into consciousness by a gonfalcon clad lance prodding precariously close to his heart, and along the shaft of that deadly weapon the camera pans upward to reveal a sixth century knight, (William Bendix), complete in armour, seated astride an escutcheon mantled charger. He forces Hank to surrender to him announcing that he is "Sir Sagramore l'Desirous, knight of the round table ....at Camelot, capitol of the Kingdom of Britain". 'Tis to this turretted castle that Hank is taken wherein merrymaking is abundant before the ageing King Arthur (also played by Sir Cedric Hardwicke). Sir Sagramore enters with his captive and calumnously charges him with being all kinds of a monster which he valiantly quelled. As they entered the King's niece, Lady Alisande, was singing "When Is Sometime" to the company but now she pleads for Hank's threatened destruction by burning at the stake: "Pardon, my lord, but the monster seems a gentle sort....his features are not unpleasant". The wicked Merlin will have none of this and Hank seems doomed to die at dawn.

A penitant Sir Sagramore visits Hank in his cell with less than an hour to go and suggests that Hank might match his wizadry against Merlin, but he leaves Hank in sad farewell uttering, "Nay, a greater sorcerer than Merlin? None such exists". Hanksis not so sure though and searches his pockets for possible aids to that end. As the cell door closes on him, he murmers in an aside: "Well now, if it's a miracle they're after! Ooh-ha-ha-ha-hah; meet the new champion!"

When he is taken to the courtyard the charges are read out from a parchment scroll upon which Hank plays the concentrated beam of the sun's rays through his concave watch glass, causing the scroll to burst into flame. During a wordy harangue by Merlin, Hank does likewise to his robe; after which he does other 'magical' tricks with matches - "twigs" as Hank calls them. He soon establishes himself as the top man in the sorcery department, saves Sir Sagramore from what was to be his own fate and takes Sir Sagramore - 'Saggie' as he calls him - as his squire. He is also dubbed Sir Boss by King Arthur.

Meeting up with Lady Alisande at an ensuing court ball he makes to dance with her but finds the musical accompaniment uninspiring. He approaches each of the musicians in turn and instructs them a particular melody to play, turning the rhythm section into a "four-beat man" and adding the brass of the court trumpeter. "Sir Boss, what a wondrous transformation!" cries Lady Alisande, as they dance to the tune of "Once And For Always". They sit the rest of it out and Hank pitches a little woo, calling her 'Sandy' by the colour of her hair. The setting is ripe for a song, and Hank obliges with "Once And For Always" in which Sandy later joins, adding the (to her) novelty of crooning the words. Hank kisses her and arranges an assignation with her at his smithy, which establishment was granted to him by the king. This meeting on the morrow is overheard by Merlin and Sir Logris and knowing that Sandy is betrothed to Sir Lancelot, who is away on a quest, they plan to acquaint him of his rival in the hope that Lancelot will return and slay Hank.

Sir Lancelot arrives at the smithy to have an edge put on his sword and whilst there learns the identity of the blacksmith. A challenge by way of a joust to the death is arranged, but Hank cannot cope with the encumbrance of a suit of armour and is almost resigned to his fate when he hears the whinny of his horse, Tex. Asking for a 10 minute postponement he discards his armour, and now armed with just a lariat whistles up his trusty steed. Hank runs rings around Lancelot, defeating him in unseemly humiliation which causes Sandy to denounce Hank's ungentlemanly ways and offer solace to her lately fallen knight; for it had caused the court much mirth.

At the smithy once more, Hank busies himself fashioning a pistol which he demonstrates to a group of pop-eyed kids by shooting at and smashing a clay pot. Saggie arrives to advise him that Sandy and Sir Lancelot are to be wed "within the week" so Hank decides that the time has come for him to leave. However, a young peasant girl arrives to seek Hank's help for her father who it is feared has the plague. Hank leaves with the girl advising Saggie not to play around with the pistol; "You might get hurt". "With this toy?" retorts Saggie, spinning the chamber of the revolver into which he places a ball. In an amusing scene he tries all manner of means to make something happen,

even pressing thebusiness end of the barrel against his chest whilst trying to force the hammer forward. Finally, he throws it down in disgust whereupon the gun fires the round, startling him more than somewhat: he falls in a faint!

When Hank arrives at the peasant's home he finds the father dead and learns from the mother that her two sons are imprisoned in the lord of the manor's dungeon until they have confessed to felling three fruit trees, which deed they were innocent of (Mark Twain just had to get George Washington in there somehow!). Hank returns to Camelot to advise the king that his subjects are suffering abject poverty and villiany which at first King Arthur is loathe to believe. Hank persuades him to postpone an official visit to London and travel around the country incognito so that he might see things for himself - at the same time possibly curing the cold that continuously besets him. With Saggie accompanying them, all three set off into the countryside in high spirits and ragged clothing. This sequence features the most famous trio number since Bing's Rhythm Boys days - "Busy Doing Nothing". Considering the utterly unmelodious voices of his confreres on this song, Bing, with the two of them perform a memorable singing feat which happily was to be re-cut as a commercial recording.

Once again their plans have been overheard by the villians of the piece and ere long Sir Logris executes their capture and takes them to London to be sold in the slave market. Meanwhile, Sandy has been informed of their capture and she too dresses in humble garb and rides to London on Hank's horse, Tex, in the hopes of affecting their freedom, but all to no avail as she too is taken prisoner. All four of them are incacerated in a dungeon awaiting transportation to work as slaves in the mines of Devon. During their enforced confinement Hank and Sandy reaffirm their love for each other and sing their theme song to prove it!

The guard very conveniently leaves the dungeon keys within tempting reach of an outstretched arm, and as Hank just happens to have a powerful magnet about his person the keys are soon within his grasp. Sandy's feminine intuition that they might not meet again once they have escaped prompts her to give Hank her gold amulet as a good luck charm. Their escape turns out to be out of the frying pan into the fire for apart from Saggie they are soon captured. Sandy is sent in best fairy tale tradition to Merlin's locked tower, whilst Hank and King Arthur are sentenced to be beheaded according to the king's own edict that if one slave of a household be guilty of murder then all male slaves of the same household shall die with him. As a guard was killed during their temporary freedom their fate seems sealed.

As Hank and the king move along the line of condemned prisoners the sound of the headsman's axe falls sickeningly upon their ears; even closer. Hank is anxiously flicking through his almanac as the king asks him if he might not "extract another miracle from thy book of wonders?" "It'd take an awful big stunt to get us out of this", Hank replies. "Wait a minute, what day is this?", he continues. "The 21st day of June in year 528", answers the king. "I think then, Sire, I have your miracle". Hank steps up to the executioner's block and proclaims to the ogling crowd that unless all the prisoners are set free immediately that he, as magician to King Arthur, will blot out the sun so that it will never shine again. This remark is received with great hilarity by the gathered population, but unlike Hank they are unaware that a total eclipse of the sun is imminent. "Alright, you asked for it. Now with a few well chosen words I shall blot out the sun forever. Wallah, wallah, Washington, Poncatony Pennsylvania, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, New York, Newhaven and Hartford leaving on track...." shouts Hank in his best station announcer voice. The moon begins to blot out the sun causing instant panic among the foregathered crowds, who scream for mercy. Even King Arthur expresses his wish to rather die by the axe than live in a world of darkness. "I'm sorry, Sire", exclaims Hank, "even I can't stop the show". To the implorations of the crowds the Lord Mayor decrees that the prisoners shall be set free, and in a few moments Hank has brought the sunlight back into their lives by his 'sorcery'. (A real eclipse was filmed especially for this sequence).

Hank finds his horse and quickly rides off to rescue the fair maiden from Merlin's tower. Encountering Sagamore on the way he obtains the pistol, bids him farewell and goes it alone. Seeing him coming, Merlin orders that Sandy be chained in the courtyard in full view. Hank soon sets her free but turns to

see Sir Logris about to ride down upon him with lance at full tilt. Taking unerring aim Hank fires the pistol at his assailant shooting a hole clean through his breastplate and bringing him tumbling dead almost on the prone figure of our hero, who, from injury, falls into unconciousness. It is the last he sees of the ancient Camelot for he reawakens into the twentieth century where we see him drawing his wondrous tale to its conclusion to the Lord Pendragon. "And Sandy?" enquires his lordship. "Never saw her again", answers Hank. "Young man; the view from the east parapet is particularly lovely at this time of the aftertoon....my niece is usually there about this time", Lord Pendragon tells him - with a farewell sneeze.

Hank wanders out to the parapet...."Sandy!" he expostulates, at seeing the young lady standing there. She turns: "How did you know my name?" "I'm glad you asked me. This may take a little time!" And so the story reaches the time-honoured Hollywood happy ending with the eventual outcome a foregone conclusion!

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London ITV have been screening a weekly series entitled 'WORLD AT WAR', which is made up, principally, from contemporary propaganda and news-reel film relating to the Second World War. I have seen some of these episodes but was not tuned in at 9.00 p,m. on Wednesday, 12th December when the sub-titled episode, 'On Our Way' was screened. I am therefore indebted to Edward Hale for acquainting me with the interesting fact that Bing and Bob Hope were seen and heard in that programme which related to America's intervention in the fracas. Even better than just telling me, Edward went to the trouble of writing to the producers of the programme and obtaining a transcript of that part of the programme which is of concern to us as Crosby enthusiasts.

The substance of the clip was Bing and Bob selling war-bonds - it would seem by auctioning off a part of a German aircraft that had been destroyed in action. The dialogue was as follows:

Bing: "Twenty-two fifty; this is really a handsome thing to have. You're getting this as a premium for a war-bond for twenty-two hundred and fifty dollars. So it's really a good purchase for anybody".

Bob: "I'd like to have a look at that!"

Bing: "Can you see it? Hope is looking at the show - he may increase his bid to twenty-two fifty-five!"

LAUGHTER

"You're going to come up a little, aren't you, 'Flabby'?"

LAUGHTER

Bob: "How much you got?"

Bing: "I got twenty-two fifty".

Bob: "Well, I'll go twenty-five".

This verbal exchange took place before a crowd of people in an unnamed American City where they were working their patritic spiel from a makeshift rostrum. Both were dressed informally, but Bing was actually wearing a tie! In a later write-up in the 'TV Times', entitled "When Hollywood Went To War", Bing, Bob and Dorothy Lamour's names came up when it was mentioned that Bob Hope was equal second with Marlene Dietrich as the most travelled entertainer during those dark days. For the curious, the most travelled were Paulette Goddard and Joe E. Brown, again, jointly.

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Lucky indeed are we to have a repeat of the 14-part radio series on Bing that took us through his life and times during some golden hours of last summer's Sunday afternoons. Now at a different time, 12.02 p.m., Radio-2, Saturdays; the series began its re-run on the 29th December 1973; but in all other respects remains the same. The 'Radio Times' quotations are the same for each week's edition, but the listing of guest speakers and photograph of Bing have

been ommitted. It has been interesting to note how many casual listeners not especially devoted to Bing have, nevertheless, been making a point of tuning in to this series. Not only interesting but gratifying to us devotees and the producers.

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Again on Radio-2, the week before Christmas on Barry Alldis's 'EARLY SHOW' there was, for the early risers or late retirers, the pleasure of hearing one track each morning from Bing's most recent Chrustmas LP, ' A TIME TO BE JOLLY'. Not coming into either of the aforementioned categories it was left to Editor, John, to inform me of this regular 6.50 a.m. listening pleasure.

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Breaking away from my original edict that I would not encroach beyond the boundaries of my own viewing and listening area, it gives me great pleasure to report some details of Bing's Christmas TV show as were sent to me by a good friend who resides in Florida. Although not a Bing fan she is aware of my interest and sent me the relevant page from 'TV GUIDE' which is a comprehensive multi-channel featured magazine published in the States.

On Sunday, 9th December 1973, a 'Close up' photograph, showing Bing and his present family, accompanied a write up of a 'Special': 'Yuletide cheer with the Crosbys and company', that went out at 8.00 p.m. on channels 7 (Miami) and 5 (West Palm Beach) - being two of the TV stations for that State. The programme was entitled 'A WHITE CHRISTMAS AT SUN VALLEY' and was pre-viewed as follows:

> Bing, his wife Kathryn, daughter Mary Frances, and sons Harry and Nathaniel ring in the holiday at Sun Valley, Idaho. Their guests: Michael Landon, Connie Stevens, comic John Byner and 1971 national figure skating champ John Misha Petkevich.
>
> Highlights: a performance by Petkevich set to "The Twelve Days Of Christmas"; and, on the slopes, a torch-lit procession of 75 skiers backed by the music of "O Come All Ye Faithful". (60 min.)
>
> SONGS
>
> "White Christmas", "Sleigh Ride", "Joy to the World", "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear", "Christmas In Sun Valley".....All
>
> "Remember", "O Little Town of Bethlehem" .....Connie
>
> "Winter".....Michael, Harry
>
> "We Three Kings of Orient Are" .....Bing, Harry, Nathaniel

I understand from another source that this programme was pre-recorded in March of 1973. If any Stateside member has a dubbing of this programme, I'm sure that many of us would be most happy to hear from them!

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Tune in to Radio-4 on a Friday at 7.30 p.m. and you can hear 'PICK OF THE WEEK', this programme being Nancy Wise's selection of interesting items that have been broadcast throughout the previous week; the items being introduced by Peter De Rosa.

On 18th January a Radio Merseyside 'scoop' was culled from the previous Sunday's edition of 'Music And Memories Of The Thirties', as presented by Frank Unwin. He had received a special message from Bing which must have been recorded just prior to Bing's hospitalisation on New Year's Eve: in it Bing referred to his earlier trip to Britain:

> "I was up in the vicinity of Liverpool last year - a golf tournament there. I played with Bruce Forsythe and Gary Player. Gary's a great guy but he's very serious about his golf, and you

can imagine anyone trying to be serious with Bruce Forsythe in the group - he's a riot, he gave us an awful lot of laughs...."

Bing made mention of the fact that he didn't get a great deal of mail from that quarter - "Beatle country" - he noted.

"Maybe if I went up to Liverpool and made a personal appearance it might stimulate a little acticity - even then, it might have an adverse effect! I'm home for a while now, Frank, just got a few little chores to do....television promotions for charitable causes like the cancer and the heart and the muscular dystrophy, and one thing and another. So that's my news, Frank - play a couple of my records. Maybe if you're gonna play one I'd like to suggest that you play "My Isle Of Golden Dreams" - I bet you don't have that!"

Well, Frank Unwin did have it and it was played. Bing has often stated in the past that this is his favourite recording, although he is bound to concede that "White Christmas" has a special place in his memories on the strength of its sentimental popularity.

When the song had finished, Peter De Rosa came back in with the remark: "The one and only Bing; good to learn he's on the mend". And so say all of us!

****

I've never previously watched the BBC-1 production, 'IT AIN'T HALF HOT, MUM', written by Jimmy Perry and David Croft, and after having seen the one episode I am unlikely to watch it again!

Prompted to tune in by way of the 'Radio Times' programme notes and accompanying picture, which showed two of the main characters dressed as Bing and Dorothy Lamour, I had to sit through 25 minutes of trite and peurile humour before the implied Bing and Dottie characterisations envinced themselves in an episode entitled 'The Road To Bannu'.

The programme is based on a Services Concert Party which in this instance found themselves stranded, and in danger from trigger-happy tribesmen in a remote part of the North West Frontier. During a parley with the armed tribesmen, which the officers conduct through an interpreter - their own local native guide - the chief tribesman asks them who and what they are. He is told that they are the Royal Artillery Road Show. Back through the interpreter comes the glimmer of hope through recognition.

"Colonel, sahib, he say he has seen every road show".

The tribesmen continues in English, "ROAD TO MOROCCO, ROAD TO SINGAPORE, ROAD TO...." the rest of this list being drowned in audience laughter, but he continues again. "Show me Bing Crosby".

The Colonel tries to explain that they haven't got Bing Crosby, but the head tribesman is in no mood for unsatisfactory explanations. The interpreter explains this to the Colonel.

"Colonel, sahib; he say you are hiding Bing Crosby and one hundred rifles pointing at us, and he say bring Bing before him!"

"We haven't got Bing Crosby", insists the Colonel.

"Colonel, sahib; he say, they count up to ten, then if no Bing they go bang!"

The counting begins with rifles aimed menacingly at the pathetic little road show. At the count of nine, and now resigned to their fate, the sound of a rather tinny piano trips out the lead in to "Love In Bloom" and down from the back of the truck jumps Gunner Solomons (George Layton) dressed in slacks, flowery shirt and snap-brim trilby, smoking a pipe and carrying a golf-club. It is as near to Bing as he is ever likely to get for his vocal rendition of that song would have prompted me to have shot them all anyway had I been the tribesmen. However, they are duped, and cries of "Bing", "Bing" fill the air in the best tradition of the accepted Pakistani-type accent.

'Bing' Solomons calms them down - "No autographs, please!" and makes a little speech of welcome announcing that he will groan a few songs accompanied by "that lovely little lady, Miss Dorothy Lamour".

To the strains of "Moonlight Becomes You", 'Dorothy La' Beaumont (Melvyn Hayes) makes an entrance via the tarpaulin curtained lorry, suitably attired in a bosomy sarong and, of course, wearing a flower-bedecked wig of long dark tresses. Together, the pair of imposters go through the song, halting at the end of each line whilst the interpreter translates the words to the tribesmen, even throwing in a few Bannu 'boo-boo-boos'.

In appreciation of the show the head tribesman offers the Colonel a beautiful camel saddle-wrap. The Colonel is delighted, and suggests that they give something in return - but the head tribesman has already made up his mind - he wants Dorothy Lamour! Whether Gunner Beaumont ever made the ultimate sacrifice we shall never know for the show ended in a frenetic melee of concert party soldiers and tribesmen; all drowned out by the gales of audience laughter - I'm glad that somebody found it funny.

As a matter of academic interest the programme went out at 10.10 p.m. and not at the earlier advertised time of 8.00 p.m. This being due to the resumption of normal television transmission.

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BING'S NEW ALBUM

'CHRISTMAS STAR' reviewed by WIG WIGGINS (See also page 7)

'CHRISTMAS STAR' is a special limited edition album issued by the Paulist Fathers of San Francisco, California, for the benefit of Old St. Mary's Church in San Francisco, which is described as "California's First Cathedral and a California Historical Landmark".

The front cover of the album (in colour) shows an interior view of the church and its choir, with an inset photo of Bing, and the caption across the top: "Bing Sings with Old St. Mary's Choir". The LP album number is given as "Stereo B/J 202", and the album sells for $6.00.

Most of the selections on the record are by the choir alone and are typical Christmas melodies. Only the first ("Christmas Star") and the last ("We Love Old St. Mary's") songs feature Bing. I do not know when Bing recorded his two songs, but the release date of the album was Christmas 1973.

The fidelity of the entire record is excellent, and the choir is quite good. Neither of Bing's songs are, in my opinion, anything special from a musical point of view, but Bing sings them well, and was in pretty good voice.

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FROM AN AMERICAN RECORD MAGAZINE:

891654. Collector's Item: PARDON MY BLOOPER! Second Series. Uncensored super bloopers made by some of your biggies: Dave Garroway, Lowell Thomas, Bing Crosby, Adlai Stevenson, Toscanini and even Santa Claus, including Joseph Cotton's classic "Sonny Tufts" announcement. Find out what the lady said when she won the giant salami.

2 Record Set Complete, only $4.98

(EDITOR's comment: See page 34 of this issue for the full address of the company from which this album can be obtained.)

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Please remember the 'copy' deadline....all letters and articles for publication in the June issue of "BING" should reach 'BINGVILLE' no later than the last week of May. Members' co-operation in this important matter will be greatly appreciated.

EDITOR.

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CROSBY SHOPPE

Free advertising for members wishing to buy, sell or exchange items of Crosbyana.

WANTED: The following LP's are required: 'THOROUGHLY MODERN BING' (UK version) and 'LOUIS ARMSTRONG & BING CROSBY LIVE' (Family SFR-DP 655). Please send details of condition and price to: Dave Rapp, 931 Decker Lane, Warminster, PA, 18974, USA.

WANTED: The following item is required on tape: a Christmas radio programme (c.1957) featuring Bing and Kathryn Crosby. Jo Stafford was also on the show and she duetted with Bing on "Silver Bells". No other information is known, but if you can help in any way please contact: Tom Colborn, 5-H Peabody Estate, Herne Hill, London SE24 9EB.

OFFERS INVITED: The following items are all 78 rpm discs in varying grades of condition: (some titles have been shortened)

1. Whiffenpoof song/Kentucky babe
2. South America, take it away/Feudin' & Fightin'
3. Would you/My mother's waltz
4. It must be true/Be honest with me
5. Goodbye little darlin'/Moonlight on a white picket fence
6. If I loved you/Bluebird singing in my heart
7. Hang your heart on a hickory limb/Sly old gentleman
8. Who gave you the roses/Strangers in paradise
9. Sioux city Sue/You sang my love song to somebody else
10. Let me call you sweetheart/Story of Sorrento
11. Humpty Dumpty heart/Skylark
12. Things we did last summer/When you make love to me
13. Sweet little headache/Jubilee
14. Waltzing in a dream/We'll make hay while the sun shines
15. Clementine/Old oaken bucket
16. Let me love you tonight/Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral
17. But beautiful/Golden ear-rings
18. Shanghai/Black Ball Ferry Line
19. Once in a blue moon/Give me a heart to sing to
20. You've got me where you want me/Yah-ta-ta
21. I've got you under my skin/Easy to love
22. McNamara's band/Dear old Donegal
23. Sweet Georgia Brown/After sundown
24. Bells of St,Mary's/I'll take you home again
25. June comes around every year/Out of this world
26. Please/Here lies love
27. It makes no difference now/I'm thinking tonight of my blue eyes

All offers to: Barry Freestone, 5 Glanville Road, Blenheime Gardens, Brixton Hill, London, S.W.2.

WANTED: The following records are required in the best possible condition: "The Second Time Around" (MGM 45-rpm 'single'); 'ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE' (Volume 9 in the 'BING'S HOLLYWOOD' series). Please write to: John Ewens, 36 Southview Drive, Upminster, Essex.

FOR EXCHANGE: The following Bing records are all 78-rpm 'Brunswick' and for disposal on a strictly exchange basis: (Please don't offer cash)
03782, 05313, 04115, 04292, 04442, 03665, 04139, 04131, 04553, 04483, 04568, 04613, 04623, 02805, 05620, 03087, 04420, 04022, 04072, 04672, 04657, 04339, 04098, 03635, 04425, 03839, 01219, 04581, 04660, 03813, 03932, 03775, 03809, 03708, 03700, 04420, 04442. WANTS: (All 'Brunswick') 05105, 05062, 05014, 04838, 04746, 04742, 04739, 04737, 04732, 04387, 04289, 04134, 04127.
Terms: 03000 series: 3 to 1 in your favour.
04000 series: 2 to 1 in your favour.
I also have two copies of 'ROBIN AND THE SEVEN HOODS' (US Reprise); 1 to 3 in my favour. Please write to: Fred Tetlow, 30 Cromer Road, Millbrook, Southampton.

FOR SALE: Members may be interested to know that when Bing was in London last October, a cameraman from the 'DAILY EXPRESS' took 20 pictures of him. These

are certainly some of the greatest shots ever taken of Bing, and they can all be obtained from the 'DAILY EXPRESS' at the prices indicated below:
Size: 6" x 4" and 6" x 8" ... 44 pence each; (3p postage on 1-6 pictures).
8" x 10" ... 66 pence each; (4p postage on 1-6 pictures).
10" x 12" ... 84 pence each; (5p postage on 1-6 pictures).
Please ask to see the Bing Crosby 'proofs' of October 12th, 1973. 'Matt' or 'Gloss' finish; state your requirements with your order.
Write to: London Express News and Features Services,
41-42 Shoe Lane,
London, EC4A 3BS.

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Available to ICC members

CLUB TIES (in navy blue and of the finest possible quality - worn by the Editor and hundreds of members at many public functions) ... £1.00 each

CLUB CAR BADGES (for either grille or bar fitting - please state which you require) ... £2.75 each

CLUB BLAZER BADGES (with either blue or black background) ... £3.75 each

Each item bears the special full-colour emblem of the ICC - certainly the best way of 'plugging' the society. Prices quoted above include postage and packing. Members are advised that eight weeks should be allowed for delivery.

Cash with order, please, to: RON BAXTER, 24 ROPERGATE, PONTEFRACT, YORKS. ENGLAND. Telephone: 2351.

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Announcing and introducing - DISC RESEARCH ENGLAND 'ARTISTE' CATALOGUES. Number one is now available....An 'Artiste' Catalogue of the complete "REX 8000" series - catalogue extent 8001 to 10241, and life span Sept. 1933 to March 1948. The first time ever that details of the 290 artistes on the 2,241 discs have been collated between the same two covers.
The catalogue is loose leaf, duplicated on single sided A4 size paper. Detail shown comprises Artiste; Issue Date; Catalogue Number; Matrix Number (if known); Tune Titles or Medley Description.
Catalogue price is 7[illegible] pence plus 12 pence post & packing - Total price is 82 pence.
To purchase a copy, please send cheque or postal order for 82 pence, made payable to: J. G. HAYES, [illegible] BOWLAND DRIVE, LIVERPOOL, L21 0JA.
(Overseas members are asked to remit by I.M.O. - total price 87 pence.)

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ICC MEMBERS are invited to join the AMERICAN CLUB CROSBY (founded in 1937). Dues ($2.50 a year) include subscription to "BING-GANG", the club magazine that features stories, pictures and discographical information on Bing. For further details write to Miss Pat Sullivan (President), 2829 West Wisconsin Avenue, Apt.310, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53208, USA.

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THE GUNN REPORT Many hundreds of 78's and occasional LP's for sale in each issue, including JAZZ, DANCE BANDS, BRASS BANDS, VOCAL, PERSONALITY, LIGHT ORCHESTRAL, BING, etc. In addition there are articles and discographical information....all presented in an inimitable and light-hearted style. Accept a FREE sample copy and full subscription details from: JOHN GUNN, 15 LYNTON ROAD, HADLEIGH, BENFLEET, ESSEX.

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BARRIE ANDERTON, 70 Southcote Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, has re-printed the book entitled "MISTAH JOLSON" written by Al's brother, Harry. Copies are available at £2.50 each, including postage. ($8.00 to Stateside members).

DO I HEAR YOU SAYING? Points from the Post

BOB ROBERTS (Kent) writes: I'd like to take this opportunity of thanking you for the very good work you are doing for the ICC and for Bing. What I have read in the December magazine is up to your usual high standard, and I especially enjoyed the article by PETER DIFFLEY - a great deal of time and thought went into it, and it made good reading.

GORDON MARSHFIELD (Southampton) writes: I'm writing to thank you for the LP-ography which, in my opinion, is about the best publication of its kind that I have ever received. I can find absolutely no fault with it, and it has been produced in a most professional manner. The cover is very attractive and the details of Bing's LP's have been set out in a very neat way. My congratulations to all concerned with its production. You will be interested to hear that the 7" mini-LP "Merry Christmas" has been selling exceptionally well around the Southampton area. Unfortunately, as with last year, it was too late to inform members via the magazine of its availability, but locally, Reg Hampton and myself have been able to supply no less than 47 copies of the disc to various colleagues.

BARRY UNDERWOOD (Herts) writes: Many thanks indeed for the "A TO Z OF BING CROSBY" - what an incredible publication! The valuable information I have found between the covers is fascinating - and my sincere congratulations and thanks go out to the compilers. This has given me hours of reading pleasure.

KEITH PARKINSON (Yorks) writes: Many thanks for the LP-ography. I have an Australian 'Coral' album which isn't listed, namely 'BING SINGS FOR CHILDREN' (COP/S 3114), containing the same songs as the Vocalion issue but in a different sequence. With magazines getting thinner these days, make the next "BING" a fat one to compensate!
(EDITOR's comment: As mentioned on page 3 of the LP-ography, all amendments and additions will be gratefully received by yours truly, no-matter how unimportant and trivial they may appear. Eventually a new edition will be produced, incorporating every item of information which is submitted during the course of the next 12 months)

ARTHUR HOLMES (Middlesex) writes: "BING" magazine seems to go from strength to strength. All the news on Bing's activities, past, present and future, and - although I have been an ardent fan of the great man for almost 33 years - I find, since becoming a member of the ICC, that I have learnt an awful lot more about Bing's recordings, etc. through this marvellous magazine. What a wonderful cover, too, the current issue has - a really glorious photograph.... I can't remember seeing this one before! I now have the 'Coral' issues reviewed in the last edition of the magazine, and I heartily endorse all that was said concerning them. Isn't the 'DAY DREAMING' record a "stunner"? 14 beautiful ballads recorded when Bing was, as so many people think, at the peak of his career (to my mind, he's been there for some 40-odd years) and it includes, of course, the title song, which is my especial favourite....on LP at last! Volume 3 of Bing and the Andrews Sisters is also first class - some great songs here as well, although most of them are already on LP.
By the way, in 'KEEPING TRACK' on page 7 of the last magazine, it is stated that track 1 (side 1), i.e. "There's no business like show business" is new to microgroove, but this appears on 'BING'S BUDDIES AND BEAUS', Brunswick LAT 8306. I've now received my copy of the LP-ography, and this is absolutely great! What a book, and what a terrific amount of work it must have entailed! I can well imagine the "blood, sweat and tears" that went into producing such a volume of information and I am really thankful to all who were responsible for this. A veritable mine of information, and, of course, something that the dedicated Crosby enthusiast just cannot afford to be without. Thank you, John, and everyone who had a hand in its making. How I existed all those years without the ICC I just don't know!

JEAN PAUL FREREAULT (Canada) writes: Many thanks for sending me my copy of the LP-ography. It's a great book and a good reference listing, and most useful for detail.

COLIN PUGH (Bristol) writes: I have now had time to study your wonderful book, the LP-ography, and I am aware that there may be reasons why certain records have not been included, but at least some may not have been known of at the time of compilation. It is only by receiving additions and amendments from collectors that you can later do an 'Appendix' issue or a revised edition. I was not aware that the 'ALL-STAR FESTIVAL' charity album was issued in Australia. My copies (mono and stereo) were issued here by Philips although their name does not appear on the record. In fact, nowhere on the records or sleeves can be found the country of origin. I understand that all other countries in the world refrained from imposing a tax on this charity disc but when Philips approached our taxation authorities they were turned down and the tax had to be paid! I think Philips took a dim view of it and it put our country in a bad light, but apparantly there was no precedent; no channels open by which the tax could be avoided and probably only an Act of Parliament could have intervened. Anyway, as I say, my copies are filed under 'UK'. Before signing off, may I thank you for the ICC tape safely received.
(EDITOR's comment: The LP-ography contains the following information regarding the 'ALL-STAR FESTIVAL' album:-

'ALL-STAR FESTIVAL'	issued on:	12" US Mercury UNM-1
Lazy river		12" AU Festival 88000 DY
(Remaining items non-Bing)		12" AU Festival 99500 DL

I must agree that there is no indication on these albums of the country of origin, but in the early stages of compiling the LP-ography we were led to believe that the suffix letters 'DY' and 'DL' were used by Australian Festival label. If any member can supply substantial evidence to suggest otherwise, I'll be pleased to hear from him. Certainly, a fully up-dated edition of the LP-ography looks like being a 'must' sooner or later, as should be fully expected with a publication of this nature.)

GEORGE PATMORE (Chelmsford, Essex) writes: I've no doubt that we have all been sticking pins in someone's effigy, according to whom we consider fully responsible for the non-showing of the 'PARKINSON' repeat at Christmas. At least we had the film "White Christmas" on the morning of the 25th but social good manners in receiving guests prevented me from seeing it. Naturally, I've seen it many times before both on television and at the cinema. Thanks for all the work you put into the magazine....it's very much appreciated.

PETER DIFFLEY (Cheshire) writes: Enclosed is my cheque for the ICC tapes. I meant to get this off sooner but the current three-day crisis has rather thrown me in arrears, as I had additional work in re-planning office hours and organising petrol ration applications for a whole fleet of company cars. The LP-ography is a marvellous compilation - a work of scholarship in addition to its excellent lay-out and presentation. Congratulations. A fine Christmas issue of "BING", and whoever typed the stencils made a commendable job. One misprint in my article, however, made me refer to Michaelangelo as a 'Sculpturer', whereas I called him a 'Sculptor'! I shall doubtless be drummed out of the Grammarians' Union, but this won't bother me. These things do happen, and as I say, the stencil cutter did a wonderful job.
(EDITOR's comment: We employ two 'stencil cutters' on the magazine who slave away over hot typewriters without pay....yours truly and Reg Bristo!)

LESLIE GAYLOR (Isle of Wight) writes: I enjoyed the last issue of "BING" very much, and also the LP-ography. A great deal of work was put into this and I think it came out very well. I was at work recently and consequently missed a really tremendous 'plug' for Bing (as a result of my writing to the BBC) on the Charlie Chester radio show....I'm sorry I didn't hear this.

CYRIL PARKER (Wolverhampton) writes: I'm sure we are all greatly relieved to hear that Bing has made a full recovery. It was good indeed to hear in 'Pick Of The Week' (Radio-4) the item from Radio Merseyside of Bing's message to Frank Murphy, ending in that grand song "My Isle Of Golden Dreams". I am pleased to say that my own collection is now mounting up nicely. I've just obtained the LP, 'EL SENOR BING' and I'm pleased to say that this plays first class on Hi-fi.

BISHOP'S BENCH

Sit a spell....more from the pen of BERT BISHOP

The question uppermost in every Bing collector's mind, now that he has fully recovered, must be "Will he make any more recordings?" Well, press reports seem favourable to that eventuality, and as we go into 1974 there remains a lingering hope that Bing will go on to notch up his 50th commercial recording anniversary two years hence by keeping in practise between-times with visits to the recording studios!

Although well into the new year now there are plenty of overspills from 1973 to be discussed and dealt with. Firstly may I thank all those members who were kind enough to send Christmas cards and greetings to yours truly - much appreciated. Then there are the couple of quiz items. Well, I expect that most members will have recalled that the Indian board game, Parcheesi, was alluded to in the 1960 recording of "Little Ol' Tune":

"First you write a little ol' tune, real easy.
Not as hard to play as, let's say, parcheesi...."

This song was duetted by Bing with Louis Armstrong, with added chorus.

Only one member, Fred Reynolds, wrote to me concerning the Members of Manser I.Q. query which was posed on page 28 of the Christmas "BING". Like myself, and possibly many others, Fred was unable to come up with the solution and so far, a letter to David Dimbleby, who introduced the problem in his 'TALK-IN' programme, has yet to be answered.

As a follow up to correspondence that I received from Bing, which was published in the last issue of this magazine, there has now been another letter from that quarter acknowledging receipt of the PARKINSON pictures. This latest letter reads as follows:

December 10, 1973

Dear Bert:

Thanks for your letter. I did indeed receive the pictures which you described, and I very much appreciate your thoughtfulness in sending them to me.

I suppose the racing season is over now in England - at least the flat season, so there won't be any more starts for CLANRICK, but if you see anything about him in the SPORTING LIFE - he may have raced after I went through England in October - let me know about it.

The word "klutz" is probably a Jewish expression, meaning lackadaisical, or inept, or maladroit - I think that's the way it's intended in the song.

Glad to hear about the new releases on some of the old material. That's about the only way we know whether anything like that is being released is if somebody hears it over in England.

I don't think they do much about it over here.

I don't know whether 1969 was a vacant year or not for releases. Somebody told me that I had made one every year until last year, when we had "Tie A Yellow Ribbon" come out. So I just went along based on that information.

I hope all is going well for you and your associates in the ICC.

We certainly appreciate all the things you do for me and my work.

Say hello to Leslie Gaylor when you see him, or hear from him.

Warmest regards, and best wishes for a Happy Christmas and a Joyous New Year -

Always yours,
(signed) Bing

*"Hey Jude, Hey Bing" was recorded in 1968 but released in February, 1969.

It is interesting to note Bing's comments on his commercial recording fruitless year of 1969. I put the question to him after his comment on radio that he couldn't let a year go by without cutting a new disc. Despite what he has kindly written it would seem that 1969 remains a 'vacant' year with regard to actual recording dates.

Despite Harry Avery's factually documented reasoning for discounting the theory that "Face The Music Medley" was, as has been reported many times, taken off the market the same day as issue his rather strong words - "absolute rubbish" - remain unproven. There is more than one reason why a record may be taken off the market - the initial pressing may have been faulty; a not unknown occurrence even in those days of superiority in manufactured goods. The fact that it remained in the catalogues for some years, and that Harry owned a later styled pressing doesn't necessarily classify this possibly apochryphal story as being "an old wive's tale". Records disappear out of the market pretty rapidly these days too, only to turn up later on an LP when nobody is interested. The enigma of this recording's rarity must have an explanation somewhere.

Bing in books continues to prove a favourite 'Bing spotters' source and I find that friends and relatives are very forthcoming in this respect. They come to me with a sort of 'one-upmanship' attitude happy in the knowledge that being 'unknowledgeable' on Bing, as opposed to us collectors, they are able to tell me something! I hasten to add that this remark does not apply to fellow collectors from whom I am constantly learning something new about the 'Old Groaner'. Anyway, the latest discovery comes from a book written some years ago I believe (there is no publishing history within) by Herman Wouk, called 'Marjorie Morningstar'. One of the characters is a song-writer who composes one called "Old Moon Face":

> "....I remembered that my publishers had had Old Moon Face for a couple of weeks, and I hadn't heard anything. I phoned them. They said they'd been trying to get in touch with me for days. Well, baby, the song's a dead-sure hit. Crosby is going to record it."

My informant naively asked me whether in fact he had!

I'm disappointed that Jack Feather should have called Bing to task with such an unjustifiable remark as "trigger happy" in relation to Bing's shooting acticities. Like most true sportsmen, Bing is anything but a 'marsh cowboy' as we wildfowlers and rough shooters refer to trigger happy types who bring disrepute to field sports by their infamous behaviour. Happily they are few. The very fact that Bing is actively interested in the American wildfowl preservation society 'Ducks Unlimited' and the similar 'Trout Unlimited' underlines what I have always maintained; no-one has greater incentive to protect and maintain a strong, healthy abundancy of wild life than field sportsmen. Certainly no one of my personal acquaintance has done more than myself to ensure that my pond has fish and that pheasants and other game are to be seen on my few acres and surrounding farmland. As our late, great sporting King George VI said:

> "The wild life of today is not ours to dispose of as we please. We have it in trust. We must account for it to those who come after."

Happily, Bing, along with tens of thousands of field sportsmen throughout the world are continuing more than ever to ensure that we <u>are</u> keeping it in trust, as always.

It was with great pleasure that I read Jean Rook's comment about Bing being one of those things "you just can't do without". (The full comment is reported on page 5 of this issue). Before the commencement of Bing's long running radio biography last year she had made such a delightful pun on her reaction to the news of the forthcoming series - "One long groan" - that I, for one, took it as a wry piece of tongue-in-cheek humour with no harm meant. I'm glad to note that my faith in human nature has been justified!

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STROLLING, JUST STROLLING by PETER DIFFLEY

STRANGE, how the Old Groaner pervades all levels of existence. Weary of the week's stint in the noxious airs of the city, I had seized cap, stick, and Burberry and set off for the country with no thought of Bing, nor indeed of anything but the great, green hills of Derbyshire and the buffetting wind at the crest which rips through the mind, scouring it of the city grime and fatigue.

Having, with commendable fortitude, resisted the temptation to turn in for a quick pint of energy at the last village hostelry before the climb began (fatal before a climb - the elixir of life after it) I strode up the lane past the few remaining cottages, eyes revelling in the greenness of the surrounding hills, lungs welcoming the freshness of the air, and Burberry contemptuously flicking off the first faint spatterings of rain, when suddenly I was brought to a complete halt by the incredible sound of a jazz cornet searing through those bleak fields. There was no mistaking that glorious, open tone and the simple beauty of the phrasing - this was Bix: it could be none other.

I listened, entranced, as those golden phrases rang through the still air. Impossible to describe that tone, although some genius with words whose name I have forgotten but who deserves to be immortalised for the description, spoke of it as 'like firing bullets at a bell'.

Searching for the source of the sound, I located it at the partly opened window of almost the last cottage in the lane. The window was heavily curtained, and, it being unseemly to pry, I could but continue on my way, and did so, albeit a little more thoughtfully, pondering upon the strangeness of life and the odd way in which Beauty, in diffusing the Universe, finds unity in its very diversity. For here was the music of the frantic, jazz-age America permeating the pastoral calm of an English village, and yet it was not out of place. Such is the magic touch of genius that Bix was not dwarfed by the freshness of the natural creation around, nor did his sudden incursion upon the scene in any way detract from it. Each seemed to hold a special place in the scheme of things, as perhaps must always be with the best that life can offer, whether it be Bix, Beethoven or Bing.

Whether the sound had come from record or radio I am unable to say. Possibly some village ancient had been re-living his youthful enthusiasms, or maybe some stripling was discovering Bix for the first time: for this is the recurrent theme of great things - they endure. Heedless of Time, they glide down the years as a golden thread, linking all generations in a common bond of appreciation and enjoyment. 'Age cannot wither, nor custom stale their infinite variety', as George Formby once quoted the Bard as having written!

Anyway, whatever the source of the sound, it had jerked the train of thought into motion and I was once again travelling Bingwards - for who can hear Bix without immediately recalling Bing? Back in the early Whiteman days, they had, on occasion, shared rooms and no doubt sat talking, drinking and making music into the small hours. And what records they made together! Master, meet the Master! For Bing's extraordinary success in so many fields of music cannot disguise the fact that he is essentially a jazzman and has always been at his happiest when making music with his fellow jazzmen. His early days were spent working with some of the greatest names in the jazz world - Bix, Lang, Venuti, Teagarden, the Dorseys, Goodman, Rollini and so forth, and this incomparable band accepted Bing as one of themselves. He spoke their language and won their respect and regard as a jazzman in his own right; and, listening to his recordings with the Whiteman band, who can doubt his fitness for the cherished accolade.

I make no claim to expertise in this (or any other) field, and the opinions I express are simply those of the average music lover, but listening to those early recordings of the Whiteman or Goldkette bands, or indeed to any of the better jazz-oriented bands of the era (and here I must be careful, for the average jazz afficionado will shudder at the mere mention of the word in connection with Whiteman & Co., but for my money, where there was Bix, Lang,

Venuti, Teagarden or Rollini, there was jazz, for any one of these men were capable of transforming the most mundane of commercial arrangements into something vastly different. Often - and particularly with Bix - it was achieved by a brief solo, a sudden burst of incandescent glory which transcended all that had gone before and lifted the music from the sidewalks of New York to the cloud-capped towers of enchantment). However, I digress grievously.... listening, as I say, to those early recordings of these great bands, the one thing evident to even the dimmest musical sense is the appalling drabness of the vocals - about as inspiring as a line of wet washing on a rainy Monday. Time and again Bix would light the fuse and a great band would soar to the heavens, only to be dragged to earth by the weak strains of another dreary vocal. To this general aridity of the vocal field there was one sparkling exception - yes, you've guessed it - Bing.

Using his voice as a jazz instrument, he could swap note for note, phrase for phrase with any of the jazz greats, and never be outshone. It must have been an easy matter, even in those very early days, to predict great things ahead for Mr. Crosby, for he was, quite simply, the most exciting singer ever to have appeared on the popular scene. He completely overshadowed his contemporaries, and no male vocalist of his type could approach him. It was fashionable to compare him to Russ Columbo and Rudy Vallee, but could either of these singers have stood up to Bix, Goodman or the Dorseys? I fear they would have been totally eclipsed by the white-hot, improvisatory genius of such men. This is not to denigrate Columbo or Vallee - fine singers both - and possibly it is unfair to toss them into the arena of jazz, where they are least likely to be at home. But this is precisely the point - Bing excelled in ALL fields: he could be as hot as Bix, more soulful than Columbo, and subtler than Vallee. His versatility was (and is) unique in the annals of popular song - 'he touched nothing that he did not adorn', and this is why he found no trouble in outdistancing his rivals.

Listen, for example, to the Crosby vocal on the Whiteman "Changes" - Bing sings only a few bars but these are fully as exciting as the Bix solo that follows. With the first note of the Crosby voice the number suddenly catches fire and the flames continue through the Bix solo only to die when the commercial blanket is thrown over the closing bars. A similar thing happens in that superb recording "There Ain't No Sweet Man....", although in this case Bix starts the fire and Bing fans the flames. No other vocalist of that era was capable of producing the same excitement simply because no other male vocalist could match the genius and musicianship of the great jazzmen - could stand toe to toe and slug it out on equal terms. Bing could, and we have the records to prove it: this is why, then, as now, Bing Crosby stands alone. When we are discussing popular singers, there is Bing Crosby - and the rest.

Which brings me to the 30s. The December issue of "BING" carried a clever and exceedingly interesting article by ARNOLD POPE, striking a mighty blow for the 30s. Indeed, with his carefully analysed statistics (ex-Leeds) and his well-marshalled arguments, he scattered pre-conceived opinions as ably as his namesake, George Pope, demolished wickets for Derbyshire in the late 30s. (Come to think of it, George had an equally able brother who also did devastating work for Derbyshire, A. V. Pope. Any connection, Arnold? Is your well kept secret at last revealed?)

However, alas for Arnold, statistics are houses of straw - the cruel wind has but to huff and puff, and down they come, 'leaving not a wrack behind'. You see, Arnold's case was built upon the assumption that all the requests made were for personal favourites, but was this so? Certainly he was entitled to think so, for he had no means of knowing, for example, that my choice was motivated simply by curiosity. It so happened that I had not heard the number before, and as a certain amount of hot ink had flowed regarding its quality, I took the opportunity of drawing upon the resources of those members fortunate enough to possess VAST collections, merely to satisfy this curiosity. It happened to be a 50s number (and I enjoyed it) but my personal choice would have been from the 20s or 30s. This, of course, reinforces Arnold's case, but suppose other choices had been made on similar grounds? His figures might well show a 90% return for the 30s, but again - they might conceivably show a 60% return for the 50s....who knows? For this is the danger of statistics, they can be sound, but they may be airy nothings. For example, two civil servants

checking a Welsh pub (wet area) for a week, report that the heaviest drinking was done on Sunday - completely overlooking the fact that on this particular Sunday the pub had been chosen as the venue for the annual re-union of the Welsh Guards! Thus arises the Whitehall myth that the Welsh are a Nation of Sunday boozers.

Thus does the welcome variety of human nature defy the cold logic of numbers. May it ever be thus.

Nonetheless, I would agree with Arnold that Bing's voice was at its peak in the 30s. Sometime in the 60s, whilst guesting a Perry Como show, Bing stood aside as P.C. sailed effortlessly to one of his 'high' notes. Full of genuine admiration, Bing remarked, "Man, you can still soar, can't you!" Well, in the 30s Bing too could soar with consummate ease, and without losing any power at the top as so many singers seem to do in the top range. His 30s recordings really are out of the top drawer. So what have we? Unique in the 20s, incomparable in the 30s, and surely we can say unmatched in the 40s, 50s and 60s.

For my part, I find Bing's work with the jazzmen of the 20s to be his most exciting; his work of the 30s to be his most satisfying, and from thence through to the 60s to be his most captivating. So there you have it - wherever one dips in the 50 year pie, it is impossible not to extract a plum. What an achievement!

As for the perennial Desert Island, it would be easy to choose eight Bing, but one must observe a sense of proportion about these things, and consequently on my list I fear that Bing would be jostling for elbow room with Elgar, Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Louis Armstrong and Al Jolson. The Bing I would take? - undoubtedly "There Ain't No Sweet Man....", for this has the added bonus of Bix. But I would also cheat with the shameless ease of the Politician and smuggle in vast quantities of early and late 30s, and ditto 40s, 50s and 60s. One cannot have too much of a good Bing!

Finally, a plea to the record companies - you have given us BING & LOUIS, BING & CONNEE and BING & BASIE, for which relief, much thanks, but when, oh when will you give us BING & BIX? What a jewel of a record that would be, and one that would bring enormous pleasure to Bing himself, I feel. True, the numbers are available (most of them) but scattered over such a wide and rather specialised field. Why not bring them together, for if ever two Masters deserved to share a disc it is these twin stars of the musical firmament. How about it RCA? Let each enshrine the other in the disc of the century!....

All this musing had put a good ten miles behind my boots and I was now scrambling rather wearily down an escarpment, at the foot of which lay the road to 'civilisation'. Dusk was unfolding the hills and ahead of me I could see the village taking shape as lights suddenly flicked on, piercing the gloom and giving promise of refreshment. Secure in that village was a pub I knew, which kept a tolerable pint of ale. Not, of course, the ale of which Chesterton spoke -

'St. George he was for England
And before he killed the dragon
He drank a pint of English ale
Out of an English flagon.'

'Strewth! if St. George were to rely on a pint of our current English ale it would not give him strength enough to fell the maiden, let alone the dragon! Still, as ale goes these days, it was at least drinkable, and accompanied by a great wedge of cheese it would send new life surging through the weary muscles. So, thankfully, I made for the pub, reflecting that even if the ale had lost something of its former glory there was still available food, warmth and companionship, and for these blessings long may we cherish the Inn. For as Belloc wrote so many years ago (seeing with that awesome clarity of his the dangers hidden in the years ahead)....'But when you have lost your Inns, go drown your empty selves, for you will have lost the last of England'.

And so, having spent a fruitful day of exercise and meditation, I returned home to slippers and turntable. And what music did I play to soothe the closing hours of day? I trust, gentle Reader, that you will not turn grey with horror when I say - Perry Como! I know of nothing more relaxing than this fine balladeer. And so to bed.

The ICC were saddened to learn that Bing's brother, Ted, of Spokane, died a day or two before Christmas 1973.

STOP PRESS: Members wishing to purchase the 2-LP set 'PARDON MY BLOOPER' (reviewed on page 7) should write to Liberty Library Corp., 250 West 57th Street, New York, NY 10019, USA. The order number for the album is 891654 and the price is $4.98 plus postage.

JOLSONOGRAPHY

The book on AL JOLSON, referred to by many as being the world's greatest entertainer.

Due to the continuing demand for 'JOLSONOGRAPHY', a second printing of 250 copies is now being produced. The book was first published some years ago and it has proved to be the book on Al Jolson. It is a magnificent achievement and the result of over ten years' research by author Dave Jay. It is not a biography, nor in any way fictitious. It is a veritable encyclopaedia on Jolson, providing thousands of interesting facts and figures covering every aspect of this man's amazing career.

'JOLSONOGRAPHY' is 11" x 9" approximately, containing over 400 pages and over 130 photographs. It also contains an addenda comprising of late additions, amendments, etc., is bound in leathercloth and is gold blocked. In order to make this huge book more easy, and thus more enjoyable to read, 'JOLSONOGRAPHY' has been divided into ten sections:-

I. JOLSON DISCOGRAPHY (Comprehensive)
II. JOLSON DISCOGRAPHY (Simplified)
III. JOLSONIA DISCOGRAPHY
IV. JOLSON STAGEOGRAPHY
V. JOLSON SCREENOGRAPHY
VI. JOLSON RADIOGRAPHY
VII. JOLSON SONG-OGRAPHY
VIII. JOLSON SHEET-MUSIC-OGRAPHY
IX. JOLSON BIBLIOGRAPHY
X. JOLSON FACTOGRAPHY

This book is so huge and comprehensive that the author (real name Dave Wigransky) found it impossible to publish the book in the USA because of the enormous costs involved in printing a book of this size. It was beginning to look as if the work he had devoted a great many years of his life to, would never be published. However, before his death, BARRY ANDERTON acquired publishing rights from him, and the price has been kept down to £15 ($50 USA). It is expensive, but one must bear in mind that this is not an ordinary book. In it you will find everything you want to know, or will ever need to know, about Al Jolson.

Postage is free on UK orders, USA is $3 by surface mail; air mail is about $10 (insured).

BARRY ANDERTON is now accepting remittances in part or full for this book. Payment may be made in any form of currency (money order, postal order, cheque, etc.) and should be made payable to Barry Anderton. Every effort will be made to present 'JOLSONOGRAPHY' in a neat and attractive style, and to make it as easy to read as possible.

If you are undecided about buying this book, please bear in mind that printing is being limited to 250 numbered copies, and it is extremely unlikely that 'JOLSONOGRAPHY' will be published again. You will never be able to buy a copy second-hand and you will not find it in your local library. The book is not available from commercial outlets.

Every Jolson admirer needs 'JOLSONOGRAPHY'. It will be a treasured and invaluable possession for the rest of your life. Write now to:-
BARRIE ANDERTON, 70 SOUTHCOTE ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, HANTS., ENGLAND.

THE REMAINDER OF THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN COMPILED AND TYPED BY REG BRISTO

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

FORSOOTH!

REG BRISTO WRITES

What a way to start a New Year! Still feeling punch-drunk - Pickwickian variety - from the Yuletide revelry we were instantly sobered by the calamitous news flashed from America that Bing Crosby was not only in hospital but seemingly in a serious condition. The news cast a gloom everywhere, and this wasn't being alarmist in the least. The reports indicated that the lung condition giving rise to the disquiet would have been exceedingly serious for a man less than half Bing's age.

Thank Heaven it did turn our a Happy New Year afterwards - for in an amazingly short time in view of the surgery necessary, we heard that Bing was - on THE ROAD TO RECOVERY.

What a pity that has been used earlier in this issue! THE ROAD TO RECOVERY. Could any headline be more apt, more appropriate, than when used to describe Bing's convalescence? Yet another epic "Road" production, in fact.

And how nice that brother Larry took the trouble to write to Leslie Gaylor on the very day Bing came out of hospital....with the glad news that Bing's physical troubles were apparently behind him.

> The illness of Bing has been dealt with in earlier pages by a comprehensive round-up of news items that appeared in the press, and the US clippings were of special interest. But what was really heart-warming was the revelation, or rather confirmation, of something I have often maintained: that the whole world is, in fact, a Bing Crosby Fan Club; a truly international Crosby circle.

The wave of concern and genuine regret that crossed Britain showed up the colossal affection and respect with which Bing is held by everyone. The newspapers, television, and radio covered Bing's illness with a warmth that can only be afforded a personality in a very unique position. The "bulletins" were virtually daily and news colmnists and feature writers went out of their way to add their word of anxiety, and wishes for recovery for the old Master. And perhaps this one, from the Daily Express, sums it all up in a very few words:

> "GET BETTER, BING.
>
> I, for one, wish to endorse the sentiments expressed so aptly by Jean Rook in her goodwill message to Bing Crosby. Surely he, as no other American, has become so much part of all our yesterdays (and today's) as to almost regarded as a much-loved member of the family. Bing, please get well.
>
> Mrs. E. Moore,
> Northfield, Birmingham."

(With acknowledgments to the Daily Express)

The letter was headed by a modern-day picture of Bing with the caption: "BING CROSBY - LOVED".

"PART OF ALL OUR YESTERDAYS - AND TODAYS....." Simply but exquisitely expressed. The

writer, Mrs. Moore, is not a member of the ICC except in the broader sense I have indicated above - that the whole world is a Crosby fan club. Unfortunately, it would be useless to send a letter to "Northfield, Birmingham", though I would like to have got in touch with Mrs. Moore.

I was mightily impressed, too, with the members who wrote to me expressing their unhappiness and anxiety at the news. So many said they were assuredly including a special prayer for Bing - Harry Bacon, for instance, from Broadstairs, Kent, wrote:

> "....even my mother gave up a silent prayer for Bing. We all felt like as though one of the family was ill. Thank goodness, it seems the prayers are being answered....."

And that's how it was: a member of the family was ill, desperately ill. And great was the joy, and relief, when Bing embarked on another of his epic "road" roles -

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY!
Starring Bing Crosby!

YOU WILL SEE THAT THE CROSBY OFFICE HAS BEEN SET A FORMIDABLE TASK IN NOT ONLY READING, BUT ATTEMPTING TO REPLY, TO THE MOUNTAINS OF "GET WELL" CARDS AND LETTERS THAT POURED IN DURING BING'S ILLNESS. A FIGURE OF ONE THOUSAND A DAY HAS BEEN QUOTED. I KNOW MOST MEMBERS OF OURS SENT SUCH A WRITTEN WISH. I, AS SECRETARY, SENT A LETTER TO BING JUST AS SOON AS I THOUGHT HE WAS IN A PHYSICAL CONDITION TO READ IT, ON BEHALF OF ALL MEMBERS:

Dear Bing,

The thoughts and best wishes of all INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE members - and, it seems, the whole of Britain - are with you for a speedy recovery from your present illness. It sounded alarming but thanks to the daily newspaper and TV news we are getting - great coverage! - things seem a whole lot better for you.

GET WELL SOON - AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. OUR PRAYERS AND WARMEST REGARDS TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.

17.1.74

REG BRISTO,
(SECRETARY)

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AS EVIDENCE OF BING'S RECOVERY, WE ARE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE THAT EDITOR JOHN BASSETT HAS RECEIVED A RECENTLY-WRITTEN LETTER FROM BING - A REALLY SPLENDID LETTER REPRODUCED ON THE NEXT PAGE. YOU WILL SEE THAT IT IS A LENGTHY LETTER, COVERING A LOT OF POINTS IN MOST FRIENDLY STYLE.

Bing remarks on the current gloomy situation in Britain - and that was BEFORE the General Election ended in such amazing fashion. There's one way in which Bing himself can brighten up the all-pervading gloom. COME AND SEE US AGAIN JUST AS SOON AS YOUR ARE FULLY FIT AGAIN BING! GET IN SOME OF YOUR BELOVED GOLF ON OUR COURSES - THE COURSES YOU LOVE! Wentworth, Birkdale, St. Andrews, Troon - they're looking mighty green and might welcoming!

You will note from his letter Bing's continuing surprise at learning about things of his on record that have been issued and of which he is totally unaware. This must be a great encouragement to all those members of ours who are bewailing the magnitutude of the task confronting them in collecting Crosby records....imagine, Bing is in the same boat!

EXCLUSIVE!

In a letter to the EDITOR, Bing discusses the LP-ography and his new Christmas album....

Hillsborough
February 18, 1974

Dear John:

Thank you so much for the two copies of the "LP-OGRAPHY". Very useful thing for me to have - as I told you in previous correspondence, and it certainly looks like you had an awful lot of work putting this thing together.

There are a number of things listed that I didn't even know existed or that were in circulation.

Sometime I'm going to get somebody to really make a study in depth of all the material that's floating around in which I was involved, and see if I can procure it for my files.

I certainly want to have a copy of everything that was released publicly.

I'm recovering satisfactorily after the operation. It was something quite serious, but if I take my time in a couple of months I'll be in circulation again.

The record you speak about was made for a friend of mine who is the Organist at Old St. Mary's Church on Grant Avenue in San Francisco. He also leads the choir there and he does all the rehearsing for me and the family when we've got something to do on television or a benefit.

He wrote one of the songs, and it was just a scheme to raise a little money for St. Mary's Church. I don't know if it's going to go into general circulation or publication or not.

I'm sure you can get a copy if you write to the Old St. Mary's Gift Shop, Old St. Mary's Church, Grant Avenue, San Francisco, California.

It's really not much of a record. I just popped in there one morning to cut it in an effort to be of some use to my friend.

From what I read in the papers, it must be very grim over in England just now. We, too, have our problems - although nothing as serious as the condition you're currently obliged to endure. I hope it improves.

Sending along the picture you requested, and also the autographed copy of the "LP-OGRAPHY".

All best wishes to you and the family -

As ever,
(signed) Bing
Bing Crosby

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT 'CHRISTMAS STAR' (Bing's latest album) REFER TO PAGES 7 and 24 OF THIS ISSUE.

A TAPED MESSAGE FROM BING: I was glad to note that Bert Bishop heard the radio item "PICK OF THE WEEK" which included part of a radio programme put out by Radio Merseyside. (p.22 this issue).

Frank Unwin is a very good friend of mine and a stalwart of GOLDEN YEARS, my magazine which deals with the 30's scene on more general terms. It DOES mention Bing - how could it not? - but chiefly on the basis that Bing merits, AND HAS, his own magazine.

Frank joined GOLDEN YEARS for the reason that most people join it: he just could not stand for 99 per cent of the current popular music "scene". He immediately found himself among friends who consider the music of Lew Stone, Roy Fox, Ambrose, Harry Roy, Denny Dennis, Al Bowlly, Nat Gonella, The Savoy Orpheans and so on, as music infinitely more appealing than what is generally available today.

Soon after Radio Merseyside opened up he tentatively suggested he could put on a nostalgic programme "Memories of the 30's" using his own record collection. They were rather diffident, but finally agreed to a couple of "pilot" half-hour programmes. That was five years ago - and Frank hasn't been off the Merseyside air ever since! He even records programmes in advance, and for Christmas, so that he can take a holiday now and then. And only recently his programme was rated above the Alan Dell dance music record programme on BBC2 (radio) by no less an authority than the radio critic of The Guardian.

After a year or so, Frank Unwin decided to "fatten" his record programme with taped interviews with celebrities from the bygone musical age. British leaders, instrumentalists and vocalists were roped in - and then Frank had his finest hour! He decided to approach Bing for such an interview - and note, Bing was the first personality outside of Britain he thought of for his Christmas "special". He wrote to me with his idea - and I said he need have no fears, that Bing was extraordinarily generous in complying with such requests. And so it came about that a message from Mr. Crosby arrived in time for Frank's Christmas presentation. And you will understand how shocked Frank was to get the news of Bing's illness so soon after receiving a cheery and informative tape from Bing.
Truly, there's nobody like Bing!

Bing remarks that he hasn't been to Liverpool and perhaps he should. An excellent idea - he's been pretty close when in Southport, however.

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IS THERE ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN ARNOLD POPE, our Manchester stalwart who wrote the record analysis of the Leeds request programme, and A.V.Pope, the one-time Derbyshire cricketer, asks Peter Diffley (see p.32 this issue). Quite a thought - I've met Arnold several times and never thought to ask him! I DO know that he is a keen cricket umpire.....

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And Jim Davis of London is asking about a song "Deep In A Dream of You". Without any doubt whatever Bing has sung this song. I can "hear" it now running thro' my head - but I'm blessed if I can pin it down. I feel it may have been a Mack Sennett effort - and I am certain some of our experts will quickly clear this up. It is true, however, that it was never a "commercial" release.

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And speaking of "commercial issue" I was glad to see friend Colin Pugh's elucidation of various discographical terms on p. 15 (this issue). But one he missed and which I would have appreciated was a description of a dubbing? I was asked this question by a reader - I fancy it was Ken Deacon in Southampton. Now I'm not the best person to ask discographical questions! Even if I know the answer I'm scared to put it down in the face of the expert scrutiny these pages get from people who know a lot more of disc-detail than I do. I mean, when I think of "dubbing" my mind flashes back to the days when I used to rub this greasy compound into my new football boots! Come to think of it, it was ALSO the time I was thrilling to "Please", "Love in Bloom" and other songs....anyway, not to be faint-hearted: as I understand it, a "dubbing" is a copy, a re-recording, OF a recording, e.g. from a tape copy or a recorded copy, but NOT from the original master - which makes it a "commercial" issue. This "dubbing" can be on disc or tape. A copy of a track....is that it? I know people write to me and say "can you do me a dubbing of so-and-so ?" Meaning, will you tape it for me? Is it any more complicated than that. If so, perhaps someone will enlighten us.

Come to think of it, ANY 78 record is a dubbing - from the master! And an LP is a dubbing, quite often, from the 78!

WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF EVERYTHING!

Another plea uttered in this issue by a reader for a larger issue of BING this time to lighten the gloom surrounding us. I'm all for it! And there's so much material I just don't know where to start (he says, on his fifth page!) Do you know, the plain, simple, truth is that this country, may be this WORLD, is running out of almost everything? Raw materials of a very diverse nature are literally running out!

And paper is high on the list, forsooth! That it goes up every time a new consignment is ordered has become automatic and expected. But now, a real shortage is almost upon us. Readers who go to football matches, for example, will have noted the very serious consequences of this shortage already: there are no toilet-rolls to bestrew the goal-mouth when the home team scores! Such things are not easily borne.

But to drop the frivolity - at least, I regard it as frivolity but the football supporters (sic) concerned doubtless do NOT - the paper shortage is almost certainly going to hit BING amongst all magazines. My main supplier has already grown tired of searching for supplies and has reluctantly told me he can no longer stock duplicating paper! As I had had a long and mutually-advantageous association with him this is a grievous blow for he DID offer special terms. Now we have to go to the "open market" and heaven knows what this will cost us. For the present, it behoves us to act as conservatively as possible in the size of issues rather than dry up too soon. As you know, we usually try and squeeze BING into 60 pages plus. Unless I get carried away - in the literary sense that is - this issue should not, from a common-sense point of view, exceed say 50 pages. But...we'll see.

Even more disquieting is the fact that the raw material for making gramophone records is already extremely short. The effects of this are indeed already being felt. I have this on the best authority - and when I say that I use "best" advisedly" for my information comes from EMI. This is particularly disturbing when we know that EMI has taken over from Decca the "AMERICAN" contract - that is why the Corals have been temporarily withdrawn as far as the stock position goes, i.e. stocks in the shops are not being withdrawn, naturally, but further supplies cannot be obtained until EMI reissue them later this year.

I hasten to add that my information from EMI was not in connection with Crosby material. Nevertheless, shops will take orders for records today and instead of the 3/4 days' delivery that was usual, it is now said: We'll order them...but there's no knowing when we'll get them, or if we will get them. And complaints from readers confirm this almost every day - not necessarily I again add, for Crosby records, but throughout the catalogue, as it were.

There is certainly ample room for re-thinking on the part of some of the companies, for at different times it has been confessed that far too many records are issued - records that are doomed NOT to be sold, altogether apart from the millions that are bought one week - and are in the junk-shops the next. This is clearly part of the search for the elusive "jack-pot" pop record that will pay heavily for three or four weeks - and will, incidentally, also be in the secondhand shops a short while afterwards - and is, also, usually a highly "gimmicked" record. On the other hand, it is argued that these fast-selling pop records help to subsidise the production of non-pop records which, as far as sales and therefore returns are concerned, are much more long-term. I - in fact all of us - are probably dreadfully biassed! We go to far in another direction, and like most collectors of any kind, would rather the companies issue only OUR type of record. I confess my bias and try to bear it in mind. Even so, I have read on different occasions that as much as 90 per cent of pop records issued are, or become, a loss.

One can imagine that the different sections of a record company, i.e. pop, classical, opera, orchestral, choral, classical vocal etc. etc. vie with each other within the company, leave alone the industry as a whole - and it can easily be imagined also that the "pop" sections have been getting the major share of material resources. It is in this direction, I feel, that some re-thinking is possible now that a shortage is really upon us. I cannot help feeling also that the obvious desire to switch to cassettes is part of long-term thinking by the companies for it can be seen that already as much as

half the space - and the stock - is now devoted to cassettes, both two-track and 8-track. Whether materials for these is easier to obtain than that for records I don't know, but it looks ominous.

And as already been pointed out elsewhere in this issue, now that Geoff. Milne will no longer be a powerful influence in the issue of Crosby albums, we must await the position with some anxiety. If the companies re-think on their "pop" policy it is extremely possible they will also review the "vintage" position with a careful, if not jaundiced, eye. Nostalgia is "in" in many forms, and Decca had just learned that Crosby reissues were a sound proposition. But will EMI think so? Or will it take years to prove? Let's hope not.

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A FEW MONTHS AGO I RELATED THE HARROWING EXPERIENCE I'D HAD WHEN OUR HITHERTO RELIABLE ELECTRIC DUPLICATOR VIRTUALLY WENT TO PIECES. IT WAS IN THE END REPAIRED AT NO LITTLE COST: BUT THE EXPERIENCE WAS A VIVID REMINDER OF THE TROUBLE WE'D BE IF IT HAD TURNED TO CATASTROPHE AND ANOTHER, PERHAPS A NEW, DUPLICATOR HAD PROVED NECESSARY.

So, bearing in mind that a duplicator of the kind desirable costs anything from a few pounds for a secondhand broken down apology of a duplicator to two or three hundred pounds or even more for a new one you can imagine how worried we were. On the other hand, you can imagine how ASTONISHED we were to receive a letter from Gordon Marshfield in Southampton telling us that his friend, REG HAMPTON, also in Southampton and of course a member of the ICC, had an electric duplicator he had no use for and was willing to donate to us! Luckily it wasn't the 1st April - even so, I took some convincing that we weren't having our legs pulled!

We were finally convinced it was indeed no leg-pull; and we made the further astonishing discovery that Mr. Hampton was not only desirous of donating this machine, BUT WAS WILLING TO DELIVER IT - from Southampton to Cwmbran! It seemed like fairy-land...and when contact was made with Reg Hampton (who hates letter-writing!) it lead to - - -

A MEMORABLE VISIT

The arrangements were rather hastily made but proved highly successful, and on February 16 Reg with his wife Barbara, son Gary and daughter Tracey (excuse the "e" if NOT applicable!) motored up from Southampton to Cwmbran to the home of yours truly, Reg Bristo. I was apprehensive of the hasty arrangements for as other members have discovered, unless specific directions are given our address is not easy to find. But Reg seems to be an expert and came virtually straight to No. 7 Greenmeadow Close. No mean feat.

I was most anxious to meet this extraordinary member who was not only prepared to make such a generous donation to Crosbyana but also to motor well over a hundred miles to do do, and then face the return trip. As soon as they arrived however, I recognised Reg though truth to tell I hadn't remembered it. It was on the occasion of the Parkinson TV show when I myself was in rather daze from the many members I met for the very first time and not unnaturally found it a little difficult to log them all in my mind. We were glad Reg had had the forethought to bring his wife and family with him for it turned it all into a very congenial and social few hours. I mean, something had to be done for the womenfolk when the "chauvinistic pigs" immediately launched into a non-stop programme of Crosbyana - records, tapes, cassettes, 78s, books, photos etc. etc.

Its always the same when you meet a fellow-enthusiast, especially, or particularly, one you don't see very often - there is just not enough time to say and play all the things that come up! Nevertheless, Reg and I made a brave try...and we were still playing "just this one" when the family were waiting to re-embark in the car for the return to Southampton. Among other things about Reg Hampton I was intrigued to learn that his other hobby (apart from Bing that is) is history and archaeology - son Gary, too, is even more interested as he aims to be a history-teacher in a short while. They must come to Cwmbran again for only a short distance from here is the Roman town of Isca, town and

fortress with amphitheatre. It is now within the modern town of Caerleon and is the mecca for archaeologists - as indeed, are many towns in South Wales with their truly historic castles. Some well-preserved, some crumbling away - but all redolent of great antiquity and full of atmosphere. Chepstow, Raglan, Usk, and certainly Cardiff itself - and apart from castles, also within easy range is the famous Tintern Abbey, another highspot for those historically inclined. So, history and archaeology - all incidental to the cause of Crosbyana.

Naturally, the No. 1 object of the visit was achieved - the delivery of the remarkable duplicator. How Reg came by this is another story, but it DID NOT fall off the back of a lorry! But altogether apart from this remarkable gift to the ICC the visit of Reg and his family to Cwmbran was quite a memorable one. We hope they come again.

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"OL' BLUE EYES IS BACK!" ------- Y-U-K !

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DON'T FORGET TO GIVE "THE GREAT COUNTRY HITS" A SPIN NOW AND THEN - ITS A REALLY GREAT ALBUM AND SHOULD NOT BE NEGLECTED. "Wolverton Mountain", "Four Walls", "Lonesome Me", "Hello Walls" and all the other titles - and what lovely accompaniment. One could wish that among all his "modern" accompanists Bing had managed a bit more with BILL JUSTIS. You know, even without Bing, I would have loved the orchestral parts of this record. That's saying something, is it not? Oh, and"Jealous Heart" - what a beauty!

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BERT BISHOP HAS ALREADY GIVEN HIS INIMITABLE TV AND RADIO ROUND-UP but there was on amusing telly reference to Bing which came too late for Bert - actually it was on the Election Night edition of "TILL DEATH US DO PART". I assume most readers tune into this invaluable slice of culture with the laudable intention of broadening their minds, their horizons? I know I do, come what may. I recognise in Alf Garnett so many people I have come across over the years....and been glad to leave 'em behind!

One tends to get the impression that the overbearing bigotry of Garnett must be a trial to his stodgy wife, Else, yet the truth is - and possibly the moral of the whole thing - is that with a telling remark, quietly delivered, she not only puts him off his stride but not infrequently silences him!

And whether its any credit to be mentioned in such a programme may be open to some doubt - I mean, we get "Darling 'Arold", "Twitty Heath", "coons", and various other choice epithets of the truly ignorant.....but on this Election Night show Alf was in full tirade, but for the life of me I cannot remember what it was. I know Else looked up and said "....oh, Bing Crosby? I like Bing....I sent him a get-well card...." Alf looked interested - but recovered and carried on with his diatribe....

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I suppose there are many TV programmes that may be considered to be at the opposite end of the scale to TILL DEATH US DO PART and certainly one of them was the highly intellectual quiz "MASTERMIND" wherein contestants answered questions on a subject of their choice first of all, followed by another round of general knowledge questions.

In the final of this MASTERMIND programme, conducted in such strained and sombre surroundings, one of the contestants in the general knowledge part of the programme was asked:

What was the first of the famous ROAD films that featured Bing Crosby and Bob Hope?

I think the poor contestant must have had a guess: it was rather tricky. However, he got it wrong - I think be said Bali. It was, of course, ROAD TO SINGAPORE.

1-5-74

Singer May Attend HIS Tournament

HILLSBOROUGH, Calif. (UPI) — Bing Crosby, hospitalized for pleurisy, reportedly was still hoping Wednesday he can make an appearance at his $215,000 invitational golf tournament this week.

Crosby, 69, was taken to a hospital Monday after complaining of feeling ill for four days at his home in this suburban city south of San Francisco.

Alan Fisher, the singer's butler, said he visited Crosby in the hospital Tuesday "and his spirits were high and his color very good. We're not eliminating the possibility he'll be able to attend the golf tournament.

"I don't believe he's missed one yet," Fisher said, "and we know he wants to go."

Fisher said Crosby's wife, Kathryn, 40, felt her husband had "improved considerably." She thought he would be released from the hospital Wednesday night or Thursday.

The opening round of the 33rd Bing Crosby Pro-Am golf tournament Thursday launches the 1974 pro golf tour.

Bing Crosby and family
Connie Stevens John Byner
and Special Guest Star Michael Landon
BING CROSBY'S SUN VALLEY CHRISTMAS SHOW
Tonight, NBC-TV, Ch. 4, 36, 8:00-9:00 p.m.
Bell System Family Theatre

BING CROSBY'S ANNUAL YULE SHOW DUE

For the 38th year, Bing Crosby will be singing the songs of Christmas when the Bell System Family Theater presents "Bing Crosby's Sun Valley Christmas Show" tonight on NBC. Bing's family, including daughter Mary Frances, below, will join Connie Stevens, John Byner, Michael Landon.

close up

BING CROSBY
8:00

A WHITE CHRISTMAS AT SUN VALLEY

Special: Yuletide cheer with the Crosbys and company.

Bing, his wife Kathryn, daughter Mary Frances, and sons Harry and Nathaniel ring in the holiday at Sun Valley, Idaho. Their guests: Michael Landon, Connie Stevens, comic John Byner and 1971 national figure skating champ John Misha Petkevich.

Highlights: a performance by Petkevich set to "The Twelve Days of Christmas"; and, on the slopes, a torch-lit procession of 75 skiers backed by the music of "O Come All Ye Faithful." (60 min.)

Songs

"White Christmas," "Sleigh Ride," "Joy to the World," "It Came upon the Midnight Clear," "Christmas in Sun Valley" ..All
"Remember," "O Little Town of Bethlehem" .....Connie
"Winter" .....Michael, Harry
"We Three Kings of Orient Are" .....Bing, Harry, Nathaniel

Bing Crosby . . . loved

Get better, Bing

I, FOR ONE, wish to endorse the sentiments expressed so aptly by Jean Rook in her good-will message to Bing Crosby. Surely he, as no other American, has become so much a part of all our yesterdays (and todays) as to be almost regarded as a much-loved member of the family. Bing, please get well.

(Mrs.) E. MOORE,
Northfield, Birmingham.

THE LETTER THAT SAYS IT ALL!

DOCTORS SAY that Bing Crosby's singing should not be impaired by the operation in which two fifths of his left lung were removed at a hospital in Burlingame, California. The 69-year-old singer is in satisfactory condition.

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SPECIAL

ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE YOU CAN SEE SOME OF THE PRESS ANNOUNCEMENTS OF

B I N G ' S T R A D I T I O N A L S H O W

This year, for the first time, we had a member actually in the States on business - of which there is an interesting footnote. Meanwhile, here is PETER TANNER'S report of Bing Crosby's TV show - written in Hollywood, specially for readers of BING:

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A WHITE CHRISTMAS IN SUN VALLEY:

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Bing's Christmas Show. Channel 4 Los Angeles, (NBC) 8 - 9pm Pacific Standard Time - Sunday December 9th, 1973

Once again, for the thirty-eigth year, Bing Crosby presented his annual Christmas programme. This year Bing and his family went "on location" to Sun Valley, the famous Idaho ski resort, and I can only hope that this programme may be seen in the U.K. sometime for, if not, all you Crosby fans will be missing a wonderful hour of well-balanced entertainment; a mixture of music, songs and comedy set against a beautiful and very seasonal backdrop of snow and ice. Above all, though, you will be missing the opportunity of seeing Bing himself looking amazingly youthful and in really tremendous form obviously enjoying every minute of the show.

How wonderful it is that, after all his years in show business, Bing can still produce a great show and reveal himself as the truly great super star that he is, towering above today's "amateur" pop singers.

The show opened with Bing, Kathryn, Mary Frances and Nathaniel Harry Crosby having a family discussion on where to spend Christmas.

"I'll go anywhere you want - as long as there's plenty of sun and as long as I can take my golf clubs," declared Bing.

Next there was a shot of a helicopter landing in the snow, and Bing ruefully climbing out with his golf clubs over his shoulder. "I don't think you're gonna find many golf courses around here," observed the driver of the hotel bus as they all climbed in. Cleverly done was the way in which the bus stopped on the way to the hotel to pick up Bing's scheduled guests - singer Connie Stevens, Michael Landon, John Byner and the 1971 national figure skating champion John Misha Petkevich. All this was carried out to CHRISTMAS IN SUN VALLEY, a catchy tune sung by Bing and the family.

"The only thing I like frozen is orange juice," quipped Bing as he climbed out of the bus and ploughed through the snow into the hotel.

The family, without Bing, set off for a skiing trip and are joined by John Byner and Mike for a version of the old tune BAILIN' THE JACK, appropriately retitled FALL ON YOUR BACK! Then it was time for a song by the log-fire in the hotel lounge by Michael Landon, who accompanied himself on guitar - with not an amplifier in sight! I think this song was called THERE'S A FIRE IN THE CORNER.

After a "commercial" from the Bell Telephone Company who sponsored this show, it was time for one of the real high-spots of the programme - at any rate, for me! This was a brilliant song and dance act between Bing and a snowman, complete with pipe and brightly-coloured scarf and hat. Bing figures his family had a hand in this and begins to sing IF YOU HAVEN'T GOT STYLE. After a while the snowman comes to life and joins Bing in a great dance routine. It was well-nigh incredible how Bing revealed himself to be still very nimble on his feet. in fact, it was almost impossible to be-

lieve that his had indeed been filmed in the winter of 1973 and that it wasn't an extract from one of Bing's films of the Forties or Fifties.

Next followed a wonderful exhibition of championship ice-skating from Misha Petkevich. This opened with Bing and Mary Frances sitting beside the ice-rink singing THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS. Misha starts to skate and thereafter it developed into a very memorable production number intercutting between the skating and Bing and Mary Frances singing - and again, Bing was at the top of his form.

After this, the family - without Bing - visit the hotel clothes shop to buy Bing a Christmas present. "I would like to buy him something he could use," says Nathaniel.

"Well, he could use a hit record right now!" replied Kathryn.

Bing then walks in and picks himself out a very gaudy tie, hands it to Kathryn and declares her problem is solved.

Bing then sang IT WAS BACK IN THE WINTER OF 1893 - at least, I think that was its title. This was a sort of LITTLE NELL type meller-drammer number in which Bing was aided and abetted by comedian John Byner.

Following this all the family, Bing included, go for a sleigh-ride taking Connie Stevens along with them to sing ITS LOVELY WEATHER FOR A SLEIGH RIDE. But as ever, its Bing who dominates with his quite unique personality.

Finally, the whole cast joins Bing in a selection of Christmas carols. Connie sang O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM; Michael and Harry joined Bing for WE THREE KINGS OF ORIENT ARE; there was a torchlight procession to the music of O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL. And finally - inevitably - Bing once more sang WHITE CHRISTMAS. That there is no-one who sings this song the way that Bing does is now becoming, perhaps, rather a trite claim, but once again it was the most moving performance that it always is when the Old Groaner sings it in person.

So ended a wonderful hour of top entertainment from Bing, his family and his guests. I felt very happy indeed to have this opportunity of sharing with them all this very sincere tribute to a special time of the year for so many, with Bing the perfect Christmas-spirit personality par excellence.

Bing ended the show with these words:

"ON BEHALF OF THE CROSBY CLAN, MY WONDERFUL GUESTS, AND EVERYONE AT THE BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM, I'D LIKE TO WISH YOU ALL THE WARMTH AND LOVE OF THE CHRISTMAS SEASON - EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR - GOODNIGHT!"

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This was immediately followed by an hour of Bob Hope with guests Lucille Ball, Shirley Jones and Les Brown and his Band of Renown. Bob opened with the following typical cracks:

"Did you see the warm-up? Bing was just on before me. I see the old rule - age before beauty - still applies....do you notice he still puffs on that pipe? It used to hold tobacoo - now it holds oxygen! You know Crosby's old records sell well this time of the year? They use the cylinders as Yule logs!"

Truly a great evening which went some way to restoring my faith in American TV!

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Crosby films on TV here recently included: WHITE CHRISTMAS(Twice in one week!); BLUE SKIES, WAIKIKI WEDDING, A YANKEE AT THE COURT OF KING ARTHUR, LITTLE BOY LOST, and THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S.

(Cont. over

So ends Peter Tanner's special report from Hollywood, and with no disrespect to our American readers who generously keep us supplied with news, it was a unique experience for us to have a reader in a position to make a personal report. Peter added, in an accompanying letter: ".....sounds depressing in the UK just now...not much evidence of the fuel crisis here - garages have notices NOT MORE THAN 15 GALLONS AT ONE FILLING! But as you know, US cars do only about ten miles to the gallon....Christmas decorations are banned as far as lights are concerned and swimming pools may no longer be heated... but that is quite unnecessary here."

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Peter Tanner is, in fact, a film editor and was in America in that capacity. I was even more interested in his activities when he told me the film he was working on was starring Peter Falk who has become a big name by reason of his portrayal of the slightly eccentric and wholly likeable Lieutenant Colombo in American TV films. I saw on of these films by accident one night - I am very choosy with my TV, mainly because I'm busy on ICC work every night - but I was so struck by this film that I now take every opportunity of seeing more of them. And indeed, Colombo has caught on here, it seems, in a big way. But what really surprised me was to read that Peter Falk, far from unknown of course in any case, was about the seventh actor this part was offered to. The rest were either busy or turned it down.

The offer went first to - BING CROSBY!

Seeing now that Peter Falk has made the part so completely and uniquely his own one finds it difficult to even try and visualise anyone else playing the part. No doubt it would have been given an entirely different interpretation and now it can be only a matter of imagination as to just how Bing would have played the role of the police lieutenant. It is possible he would have found himself yet another career!

Peter wrote: Peter falk is in real life very much like he is in Columbo - shy, quiet, rather like a gruff-speaking Teddy Bear. I see quite a bit of him and he always comes to the screenings of the day's work. In fact, we had one last night which he attended. Columbo has made him quite a big star now.....

Our thanks to Peter for a fascinating report.

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"OL' BLUE EYES IS BACK!" NOW WHO THOUGHT UP THAT ONE?

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MIKE FERRUZZA, 307 E. Ravine, Peoria, Illinois 61603, USA suggests that in my feature of Bing Accompanied By...."One time only..." the name Jasche Heifitz should be included, and, he confesses, stretching a point Dick Haymes (Show Business/Anything You Can Do). But this misses the point of the instalment of this series which was for accompanists ONLY. Heifitz, one of the world's greatest violinists, certainly did play WITH Bing in Where My Caravan has Rested and Lullaby (Brahms), but he did not, of course, direct the orchestra. As regards Dick Haymes, well I wasn't dealing with duetting singers &c. But, I make Mike's point for him - I'm sure, by the way, Mike would welcome letters from UK readers.

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As a point of interest, I did deal with all the other singers, film-stars and others Bing has duetted with on record aeons ago! No doubt we'll get around to it again one day.

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ALL READERS ARE WARMLY INVITED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PAGES OF "BING" - articles, memories, record news/items, suggestions, ideas - even CRITICISM if they must! Its your mag - and you may certainly help to write it!

BOB HAS BING COMPLETELY TAPED

This was a big headline in the EVENING POST of January 8 down in the south-east - in Chatham. The Bob, you will hardly need to be told, was our Bob Roberts who conducts publicity matters on behalf of the ICC and is well-known here, in America, in Australia, and many other countries as one of, if not THE, biggest of all the great Crosby collectors. So, it must be some sort of a record in itself that Bob is included in the Crosby entry in the Guinness Book of Records before his local paper cottoned on to the idea of their celebrated Crosby-citizen! Better late than never, it might be said, and this newspaper story followed....well, let ERIC GRIFFITHS (of Larkfield, Near Maidstone, also in Kent of course) tell the story of what happened when he decided to make a nice, social, call on his fellow-collector.....

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I hadn't seen Bob for some time what with the rail chaos and one thing and another, so my wife Joan suggested that whilst I was on holiday we should "pop" in and see Bob and Vera Roberts - a sort of unannounced flying visit. We arrived at Bob's Stores in Thorold Road, Chatham, just as Bob was about to shut the door in our faces at lunch-time - for his customary post-lunch nap as a matter of fact.

Our arrival put and end to that cosy plan and of course the afternoon developed into the non-stop Crosby chin-wag so appreciated by Bing-men everywhere. I did make some sort of effort to depart around 4 o'c (we had arrived at one!) and was still seriously considering it might be time to depart at 7pm. So considering we had originally thought an hour as a nice socialable visit we weren't doing too badly - and there was no sign naturally, that we were over-staying our welcome!

Shortly after this time, however, I heard a voice in the shop talking to Bob - and this turned out to be a Mr. Brian Faulkner from Radio Medway. The purpose of his visit, it turned out, was an appearance on the local radio by Bob concerning his mention in the Guinness Book of Records and how it happened I'm still not quite certain, but it seemed I was invited to attend. This was Friday January 4 and the proposed broadcast was scheduled for the evening of Sunday, January 6. As I left, finally, on the Friday Bob "appointed" me his script-writer!

Inevitably, we drove through pouring rain on the Sunday - to find Bob in his usual state of disorder, with papers, records, and tapes all around. I had prepared some ideas on the preceding day in the hope they would be useful, and this proved just as well. We hadn't asked, or been told, the duration of the broadcast and we were both working in the dark. We had both prepared lists of records that might be played, but as Bob's wife Vera remarked, she was under no illusions that they would be totally different. And they were but we managed a compromise - after all, it was Bob's broadcast. I felt, however, that we should use one song from the 30's, the 40's, and so on from each decade to the 70s thereby achieving some sort of representative balance over Bing's remarkable recording career.

I must say both ladies, Vera and Joan, played a noble part - and not only in keeping us going with hot tea! They acted as listeners, suggested questions (and answers!) and we did, in truth, get some ideas from them - and from their chatter! A taxi had been ordered to avoid the strain of getting there under our own steam - I mean, this was our first broadcast. Off we went, loaded up with records and pieces of paper we had used to jot down our ideas for a suitable programme. On arrival at the studios I was still under the impression I would sit around, albeit in a privileged seat, to watch and listen to Bob doing his stuff. But no, Brian Faulkner said "You both sit here - around the table...." There was a microphone on the table and we were supplied with headphones.

Brian then said we would have "a little rehearsal" for the 15-minute programme he had in mind and regretted we would have to cut out list of twelve records down to five, which seemed an awful pity.....but, off we went and soon the initial degree of nervousness went and we forgot the mike and chatted effortlessly in true Crosby-admirer style for about 20 minutes. It was only when Brian finally called a halt that he told us we had, in fact, just completed what would be the actual broadcast for it had all been recorded. Brian in fact was highly delighted and shouted out to some unseen engineer: "That'll do! Take One, we put that out just as it is!"

"Just like Bing!" said Bob Roberts.

I shan't go into great detail of what was said - it would take a lot of time, but apart from the rough script notes on facts and figures we had no real idea how it was going to run, especially when Brian asked me a question or two I hadn't even thought about, and Bob suddenly threw another at me. Bob introduced a couple of stories "off the cuff". So, in view of our lack of broadcasting experiences we weren't displeased with the results. The broadcast was transmitted at 11pm and Bob and I listened to it in an adjoining studio. As you will have appreciated, we had over-run our time but nevertheless, every word, every record, went out on the air and the following programme was delayed by five minutes - a rare occurrence in broadcasting.

We both had letters from listeners subsequently. Indeed, Bob had a telephone call immediately after the broadcast while he was still in the studio. We were surprised and delighted to learn later that the programme had been heard as far away as Ipswich and in various parts of Essex - all quite a distance from the Medway.

We walked back to Bob's home, our feelings high, that we had made a good job of the whole thing. Another highlight, we might say, in Crosby collecting.

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On the Monday after this novel experience for Bob Roberts and Eric Griffiths the reporter from the EVENING POST turned up at Bob's home and the story, with headline as at the start of this feature, was the result. There was also an excellent picture of Bob at work in his celebrated "Crosby Room", surrounded by tape-decks, record decks, Crosby pictures and records and all sorts of Crosbyana.

The sub-heading to the story was HE CAN SPIN YOU ANY SONG THAT CROSBY HAS SUNG, and some of the items of the story ran as follows:

"Bob Roberts's collection of Bing Crosby mementoes is unique. It is so comprehensive that Bing has asked Bob for help in compiling his own collection. Bob, 57, has more than 2000 of Bing's records, tapes of radio and TV shows, and interviews, and a collection of 40,000 newspaper cuttings.....Bob became interested in the Old Groaner after hearing him on short-wave radio in the 30's.....A room at Bob's home contains a copy of every recording made by Bing on 155 different labels from 24 countries.....Bob first saw Bing when he appeared with the Glenn Miller Orchestra in 1944. Since then he has met him about 12 times, including when he filmed in London with Bob Hope in 1960....Bob has co-authored two books on Bing. His enthusiasm is shared by his wife, Vera, who helps him keep cuttings collection up to date....currently it fills a cupboard."

(With acknowledgements to the EVENING POST.)

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So, Eric's flying visit certainly turned into something! I'm sure it proved of interest to the Medway listeners and was a wonderful shot-in-the-arm for the ICC. Seems that the dodge of getting people to"do a rehearsal"is a favourite trick of radio producers to get their interviewees relaxed and unworried. I recall a similar thing happened to Mike Crampton and myself at Radio Leeds a few years ago. It works, too!

And while on the subject of broadcasting by members, FRANK MURPHY's 15-minute Crosby programme on Radio Tyneside has been so warmly received that it is being extended to 30 minutes. Frank, who is the founder of the ICC in its present form, is quite a broadcaster, having appeared many times to extol the virtues of Bing. Frank arranged a tele-

phone-link between Bing and the General Hospital, Newcastle, on Christmas Eve. And Frank says: "Bing came through loud and clear and very, very, cheerfully. Little did we know he would himself be a hospital patient a week later and its been most heart-warming to see the widespread concern as evidenced by the press, radio, and TV".

Frank Murphy, by the way, nowadorns all his letters, or rather the envelopes, with a stamp-size picture of Bing - as well as the stamp! Most attractive.

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FEELING BLUE? Cheer up - and take a listen to:

Blue of the Night.
Blue Prelude.
Once in a Blue Moon.
Wistful and Blue.
Blue Hawaii.
Blue Shadows and White Gardenias.
I'm Thinking Tonight of my Blue Eyes.
Little Boy Blue.
Blue.
Blue Shadows on the Trail.
Blue Skies.
Once More the Blue and the White.
Then You've Never Been Blue.
The Blue Room.
Blue Moon.....

Blue or not, they'll cheer you up! By the way, any more "blue" numbers by Bing?

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SOUTHAMPTON is emerging as a real hotbed of Crosbyana! REG HAMPTON told me, for instance, that several of them regularly get together - and that Gordon Marshfield is at present engaged on taping all Bing's records IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER, forsooth! I don't know whether even Bob Roberts has embarked on this one!

But what about a Southampton Newsletter? Bound to do better than, say, Yorkshire!!! The Broad Acres, resplendent with such erstwhile correspondents as Alf Farrow, Frank Briggs and Mike Crampton are - and we say this in sorrow, not in anger! - letting the side down badly as regards their BING contributions. Scotland too - everybody's busy! Come on lads, its only once a quarter!

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Readers who also read Ralph Harding's CROSBY COLLECTOR will be interested to know that the flamboyant Ralph is stirring into life again after going throughout 1973 without an issue of The Collector - and to date, 1974 too. As explained in an earlier issue of BING, it is true that Ralph was heavily engaged in printing the mammoth film book, THE ROAD TO HOLLYWOOD, during a large part of last year. Now Ralph has asked me to print the advertisement next column:

Ralph Harding, Editor & Publisher of THE CROSBY COLLECTOR requires an Assistant Editor or a Co-Editor, resident in England, to assist with the editing and compilation of the magazine. Qualifications: must be a good typist, able to compose and write articles about Bing Crosby and associate subjects and type direct on to stencil. Must have a fairly good knowledge of Bing Crosby, his work, his activities, films, recordings, etc. plus imagination, flair and a deep interest in Bing.

All expenses paid plus a gratuity of £15.00 per issue published. Will be expected to produce between 30 and 40 stencils per issue.

An excellent opportunity of a partnership for the right kind of young man able to cope with the exacting task of editing an exciting magazine devoted to Bing. As the already heavy circulation increases, the annual gratuity will be increased to £60 per annum.

Communicate with: Ralph S. Harding,
"Crosbyana",
6, Castledine Road,
Anerley, LONDON
SE20.

Advt.

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A reader asks: Is Bob Crosby, the celebrated bandleader (Orchestra, Bobcats &c.) any relation to Bing? He sure is! Bing's "kid" brother - by about 10 years.
In case this query surprises you, I should add that the enquirer was a very young man in France - who swears Bing's best time was with Paul Whiteman!

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"BLUES IN THE NIGHT" ? Yes, I guess so!

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It really was a further tribute to Bing on a remarkable scale to repeat the Radio 2 14-instalment story of Bing so quickly. And there is evidence that, not surprisingly, its reaching a different audience! Due to different time and day of broadcasting, no doubt. Many people have rung me to ask if I KNEW Bing's life story was on the radio...

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And the radio story is bringing a steady stream of new members for the ICC.

OLD GROANER CROONS

BACK TO HEALTH IN CASUAL COUNTRY STYLE - DAILY EXPRESS March 11.

IVOR DAVIS, SAN FRANCISCO, SUNDAY.

Trim, thin, and a little pale, but its unmistakeably Bing—that familiar jaunty figure looking every inch the country squire.

And with the style that is his hallmark, old "Jug Ears" takes the relaxed road back to perfect health.

Crosby, at 69, has just come through the worst crisis of his life. In early January, surgeons cut out a piece of his diseased left lung—"the size of a golf-ball", says Bing with a bright blue-eyed smile.

Daily the world nervously waited for bulletins. Letters poured in from all over the world as if to a favourite uncle and thousands feared that those golden tones would be silenced for ever.

It wasn't lung cancer but a rare disease which doctors said he picked up in Africa. And after several days in intensive care Bing pulled through.

It was a worrying time and he admits: "I'm a very good practising Catholic. Sure I prayed a lot but I knew it was no use making a big deal of it. I was lucky to get at it as soon as I did."

Now he is recuperating slowly and knows it will be a long job. But the voice is strong and he still has that familiar mellow Crosby croon that has been heard by more people around the world than any other singer (over 400 million records in all).

QUIET:

Since leaving hospital last month, Bing has led a quiet life rattling around comfortably in his magnificent 2 million dollar estate in the San Francisco suburbs of Hillsnorough.

In Norolk jacket, muffler and duck hunting cap, he lives the squire's life with all the nonchalance that made him world famous.

As his family doctor, Stanley Hanfling, put it: "Its going to take time. Bing knows that, but we play it as it goes. He's undergone the most major surgery you can get and he took it well.....very nonchalant. That's his style, isn't it?"

Thus, the Daily Express as recently as March 11. An excellent follow-up story which is reprinted so that no Crosby member will miss it.

The story also featured a very fine picture of Bing in the dress described in the article - and very well and happy he looked.

Our grateful acknowledgements to Ivor Davis and the Daily Express.

A LIGHT INTERLUDE

PROVIDED BY.....FRED REYNOLDS, in the form of a letter. It should be explained that when BING is being prepared for posting, I take the opportunity quite often to slip in a note to many readers - readers to whom I "owe" a letter, or something I wish to acknowledge. This is often useful, killing two birds with one stone, as it were. Unfortunately, what with the speed at which I necessarily work and my appalling handwriting (unless I take infinite care!) far from killing the birds, it can cause no little anguish to the recipient. Read what happened to Fred on a recent occasion.....

Dear Reg,

I ive in, I surrender - unconditionally. Your manuscript note enclosed with the magazine has me utterly routed. The writing, seven bold and flowing words, is so graphically impressive but unfortunately I can't decipher it and it's driving me mad. Don't think I haven't tried: the first line was comparatively easy: "Letter to follow" - but the second line, "Lili Pooch to Pelican", was either a cryptic puzzle, a secret message or I'd got it wrong. All right, so I can make a mistake. "With Porch the Pelican"? "Lilo round the Pelican"? Perhaps the third word is ampersand; "Let's Purse and Pelican"? This was ridiculous. I called my wife, Nora, - who's always had good vision - and after careful study she said that the first three words of the second line were not words at all but a flow chart leading to "Pelican" - a pub she'd never heard of.

Obviously, Reg, you want to tell me something about the article I sent to you (SOUTHERN MEDLEY on the Pelican label) - but WHAT? After another half-an-hour of frustration and ribald remarks from the kitchen I decided to leave the note lying around and forget it so that I should return to it unaware, pick it up casually - and read it straight off. Ten minutes later, unable to get the thing out of my head, I snatched it up and read: "Letter to follow. Lino price to Pelican". I chucked it down again, put on my glasses (distance) and stood off examining the offending missive with quick, sidelong glances from a variety of angles and planes; I held it to the mirror and its reflection sneered at me; I fetched my stylus magnifying lens and had a beautifully enlarged view of the illegible pattern.

By this time I was beginning to twitch in a distinctly alarming manner and I decided to dismiss it from my mind and go to bed but there was to be very little sleep for anyone that night. My usually dreamless repose was this time brutally savaged by a trinity of flying ducks which, as they drew nearer in my fevered subconscious, were transformed into pelicans, while the old Guinness advert flashed on and off in neon strip-lighting.

The following day, Saturday, saw me up early, if not bright, but totally unable to face the note before breakfast. I was apprehensive and feared for my week-end but, taking my sanity in both hands, approached slowly, picked up the message and saw: "Letter to follow. Tile Round the Pelican". I rushed out into the strong sunlight where a couple of neighbours and a passing policeman kindly sought to allay my anguish. The PC concentrated hard and from his long experience and intensive training pronounced that it had been written by a medical practitioner.

The whole thing, of course, was silly and my approach immature; in my eagerness to read your pearlI had stupidly overlooked that deep though the mystery was it was of the kind at which I excel: cool, logical analysis has always been my forte. If I ignored the actual lines, curves and strokes of the illegible words all I need do was to deduce the sense that you had intended to convey: "Letter to follow. ----- ----- to/the/and Pelican". As it turned out the average Times crossword is child's play by comparison and I abandoned cool, logical analysis and tried screaming

and jumping up and down instead.

Reg, before I am quietly removed to the funny-farm, please 'phone, wire, or use carrier pigeon - but DO send the solution.

Despairingly yours,

Fred.

PS Before you send me any more notes please have a telephone installed and stand by it.
PPS. Hope you can read my typing.

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Isn't that gorgeous? Granted Fred has taken us for an outrageous ride but I can imagine how baffled he felt. Two days afterwards I have a job to read some of my writings! It would be nice if Fred wrote more often in this vein; its some time now since he wrote that brilliant indictment of Frank Murphy's TYPING - "From Frid to Frunk" - or qas it thw ether wey abou¼? Anyway, Frunk seem; ti teke mor% carre now!

But, have you worked out what I wrote to Fred? Perhaps I should have told you at the start! Fred had sent me his story "The Day of the Pelican" - granted I had a lapse of memory and thought of it as The ROAD to the Pelican (knowing Fred's penchant for things Crosby). So, just to let Fred know I had received it and liked it, I scribbled:

"Letter to follow; like road to pelican!"

However, I will not have such anguish on my hands: I will write more clearly in future!

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IT SEEMS THAT ALL RESERVED COPIES OF THE LP-OGRAPHY, THE COMPLETE LISTING OF ALL BING'S ALBUMS, HAVE NOW BEEN TAKEN UP. A SMALL STOCK IS LEFT OVER IF ANYONE OVERLOOKED IT: OR IF NEW READERS WOULD LIKE A COPY. IT IS WITH A GLOSSY COVER WITH AN EXCELLENT PICTURE OF BING AND AFFORDS HOURS AND HOURS OF HAPPY BROWSING. IT COSTS £1 POST PAID. CHEQUE OR PO TO REG BRISTO, 7, Greenmeadow Close, Cwmbran, Mon., NP4 3NR. and comes by return of post.

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MUCH THE SAME APPLIES TO "THE A TO Z OF BING CROSBY" - just a few copies left, also costing £1, posy paid. This is an alphabetical listing of all Bing's recorded songs, but NOT a discography as such, i.e. no records nos., takes, or other discographical detail. It is, nevertheless, a fascinating book and in addition to the song title listing contains similar listings of Bing's accompanists and fellow-duettists, etc. Neither of these books will be available much longer and a reprinting is not envisaged for several years.

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THE LONG-AWAITED MINI-DISCOGRAPHY IS, AS EDITOR JOHN HAS STATED, WELL INTO PRODUCTION AND WILL BE AVAILABLE LATER THIS YEAR. THIS WILL, IN EFFECT, BE A COMPLETE DISCOGRAPHY AND WILL CERTAINLY PROVE TO BE AMONG THE MOST POPULAR ICC PUBLISHING PROJECTS.

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I have my copy of the CREMO DIRECTORY - and very interesting it is, too. All those who must have everything Crosby should have a copy, throwing as it does detailed light on Bing's radio programmes for Cremo Cigars. This is not an ICC project, but is published by LARRY KINER, 7554 132nd Avenue, NE., Kirkland, Washington, 98033, USA. The cost is 2.50 dallars, or £1 approx. post paid. And if you have no US contact for getting Bing albums Larry is your man. He has in stock all the current "collector only" albums, and also these new ones:

TOTEM 1008: Bing Crosby "On the Air" featuring a complete Woodbury program of Sept.1934 with the Boswell Sisters, and four songs from the Cremo series.

TOTEM 1007 Crosby shows of Dec. 28 1949 and Jan 4 1950, with Al Jolson. (This is areal cracker of an album; beautifully reproduced).

LEGEND LP: Harry Lillis Crosby and Francis Ethel Gumm (Judy Garland) (Cont. over...

TOTEM 1002: Philco Shows of Oct. 16, 1946 and Feb. 19 1947
TOTEM 1003: " " " Mar. 5 1947 and April 2, 1947
TOTEM 1004: She Loves Me Not, from 1937.
PELICAN LP: BING.

I have several of these LPs and can testify that the reproduction is incredibly good, bearing in mind that they are from radio shows of so long ago. They do not in any way offend the ear - even ears attuned to hi-fi. These are not that, of course, but are nevertheless really excellent.

I would suggest you write airmail to Larry re. any requirements and ascertain the actual cost, and Larry says that you should add:

1.95 dollars (about 80p) for the first three LPs, then 40 cents (35p) for each additional album for postage and packing from the States. Jazz enthusiasts may like to know that Larry can also offer large numbers of such albums - Goodman, Shaw, etc. etc.

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THE CREMO DIRECTORY:

I've said above that everyone who must have everything Crosby will want this, but the more I look at it the more I feel everyone would want it, except possibly those who "discovered" Bing in the 60's and 70's - and yet in my experience, once you get the Bing-bug you just cannot go back far enough! This is, of course, a truly historic booklet that Larry Kiner has produced and it would be a great pity if it was neglected through lack of publicity, especially among British collectors.

It is nicely printed on high-quality paper; contains many pictures of Bing, actual photo-stat reproductions of American radio programmes for 1931 showing Bing as just a small item...his Cremo series was, of course, his first "sponsored" programme after his sensational solo debut for CBS in September, 1931 in which he had been presented in a "sustaining" programme. For the uninitiated this means that Bing was as yet not adopted by a commercial firm but was broadcast by CBS at their expense as an "in-between" programme. It was the first of these programmes, of course, that so sensationally started the flooding of the CBS telephone switchboards asking who was this incredible new singer? And it ensured, also, that Bing would get a famous sponsor in record time. It proved to be Cremo Cigars.

The Directory also includes a two-page spread of a radio advertisement in flaring headlines and a fine picture of the young Bing. The wording says:

TUNE.....RADIO'S NEWST SENSATION: BING CROSBY with the CREMO RADIO PROGRAMME.

EVERY NIGHT (EXCEPT SUNDAY) CBS COAST-TO-COAST NETWORK.

Imagine broadcasting EVERY night! True, these programmes followed a fairly rigid format - two songs from Bing, an orchestral item, and a third and final song from Bing.

The introductory notes to the directory, written by Larry himself says: "Cremo was presented every night...originating from Studio 8 of CBS's pilot station WABC in New York City...actually it was presented twice because of the time differences across America.. the conductor of the orchestra was Carl Fenton, a "studio" orchestra, and the musicians invariably included Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang." A letter from Bing, reproduced in the directory, confirms this - and Bing delves deep into his memory to dredge up more for Larry in his Cremo directory project.

Larry Kiner also writes: "Bing began an important theatrical engagement of personal appearances at the PARAMOUNT THEATRE in New York City shortly after the Cremo series began, starting on November 6, 1931 - a Friday and Bing no doubt made these appearances between broadcasts each night.

Larry expressed the hope that some day, some how, good recordings of these Cremo programmes may be unearthed...and that is a tremendous, if somewhat forlorn, prospect. Consider these songs you've probably never heard of: Old Playmates, Its the Darndest Thing, I'm For You One Hundred Per cent, Is This the Music of Love, An Evening in Caroline.....

No. 22

BING CROSBY ACCOMPANIED BY

MISHEL PIASTRO
BOB THOMPSON

THE LEGEND ON BING'S RECORD LABELS.

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Previously dealt with in this series:

1. John Scott Trotter.
2. Victor Young.
3. Paul Whiteman.
4. Buddy Cole.
5. Vic Schoen.
6. Gus Arnheim.
7. Dorsey Brothers.
8. Bob Crosby.
9. Bob Scobey.
10. Lennie Hayton.
11. Georgie Stoll.
12. Billy May.
13. The MacIntires, Lani & Dick, and Harry Owens.
14. Perry Botkin.
15. Russ Morgan.
16. Helen Crawford, Eddie Dunstedter, and other organists.
17. Joseph Lilley.
18. Bill Justis & Nelson Riddle.
19. Jazzmen: Buddy Bregman.
    Eddie Condon.
    Duke Ellington.
    Count Basie.
    Lionel Hampton.
    Bob Scobey.
    Joe Venuti.
20. Los Senors: Xavier Cugat and The Banda da Lua.
21. The "Once-Upon-a-Time" - 26 Accompanists who did this job just once with Bing.

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On this occasion we get completely away from Brunswicks, Columbias, HMVs and indeed the whole host of vintage 78s that Bing Crosby made as the backbone of his historic recording career.

With Mishel Piastro and Bob Thompson, in fact, we come to two quite memorable "collections" of recordings by Bing. And these made in the years when Bing's marathon Decca contract had at last expired and he did tend to specialise - if that is the right word - and be generally more selective. As he remarked on one occasion: "I don't do too much recording these days... the sprigs have taken over...once in a while someone with more money than prudence comes along and I do an album....."

Some of these albums have nevertheless been quite remarkable, and altering the coupling given in the heading, let's deal with Bob Thompson first; this musician, of whom I know absolutely nothing except that he must be highly talented for it was he that orchestrated and conducted the music score - that's the best description - for the two-album set HOW THE WEST WAS WON.

It is easy to see that anyone wanting to tell the legendary story of the incredible development of the West of America will hit on this title; so it came about that these two albums, except for the main theme, have no connection at all with the epic film of the same name, i.e. HOW THE WEST WAS WON.

It was inspired by, and adapted from, a series of articles that appeared in LIFE magazine in America in 1960 and tells the story of the West, naturally. The various headings under which music was arranged are "Exploring the Wild New Land"; "Travellers of the Great Trails"; "Ranchers & Indian Raiders"; "The Great Gold Rush Days"; "The Railroads", "Desperadoes"; "Settlers and Civilisation"; "Cowboys - The Last Frontiersmen"; and "The Mormons". Thus facets of the development of the West are covered, as indeed are the various nationalities that contributed, e.g. the French, Spanish - and Jesse James! Artists with Bing on this great project are Rosemary Clooney, Sam Hinton, Jimmie Driftwood, The Tarrytown Trio, the Jack Halloran Singers and the truly great Salt Lake Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the Desert Mormon Choir.

Bing's contribution is, of course, monumental. We hear him as narrator in the grand style, narrator in the "prospector's" dialect, solo singer, duetting with Rosie and indeed prominent in many of the "chorus" efforts. And Bing was in remarkably fine voice in July 1959 when the recordings were made over a period of 4-5 days.

The two-album set was issued on Decca's RCA label and was firmly and attractively packaged with five pages of notes detailing the story told in music on the records. There was something odd about its presentation I feel for it received little publicity or presentation in this country and to this day, I have never seen the records in a shop. I obtained it by ordering it from a large London specialist shop. I cannot help feeling, therefore, that there are many of our readers who do not possess this tremendous pair of recordings by Bing and that is greatly to be deplored. Amongst the narration and singing previously mentioned, Bing also declaims the celebrated "All Pewtrified" recitation - in wonderful dialect, too.

The list of songs in which Bing is concerned follows and it will be seen that some of them are long associated with the West while others are probably quite new to our ears. They were to mine at least - songs such as "Come to the Bower" and "Green Grow the Lilacs" - and beautiful they are too. Bing gives a remarkable performance of "Hang me, O Hang Me" and certainly in "Streets of Laredo". Rosie's performance is of high quality, also, solo and with Bing. In fact, I would venture the suggestion that their duetting on these albums is far in excess of even their high standard in other fields:

1.	Shenandoah.	20.7.59.	With Chorus.
2.	All Pewtrified.	"	Unaccompanied.
3.	Old Settlers' Song.	"	With Chorus.
4.	Skip to my Lou.	"	With Rosemary and Chorus.
5.	Streets of Laredo.	"	With Chorus.
6.	Will You Come to the Bower?	21.7.59	" "
7.	When I Went off to Prospect.	"	" "
8.	Nine Hundred Miles.	"	
9.	Hang Me, O Hang Me.	"	
10.	Git Along Little Dogies	"	
11.	Crossing the Plains.	23.7.59	With Rosemary Clooney.
12.	Buffalo Gals.	"	" " " and chorus.
13.	Green Grow the Lilacs.	"	" " " " "
14.	Jennie Jenkins.	"	" " " " "
15.	Extract from Carl Sandberg (narration)	24.7.59	Unaccompanied.
16.	Bound for the Promised Land.	"	With Rosemary, and Chorus.
17.	Buckskin Joe.	"	
18.	Red River Valley.	"	With Chorus.

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19.	The Music of Home.	28.1.60	With Chorus.
20.	The New Ashmolean Marching Song	"	" "
21.	Its A Good Day.	"	" "
22.	Aloha Means I Love You.	"	" "

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Tacked on to the epic recordings for HOW THE WEST WAS WON are the four titles made by Bing with Bob Thompson separately. These were the subject, also, of considerable interest a couple or three years ago when they were issued on an Australian RCA EP record, and oddly this is the only way they have been issued. Four good titles, of which the best in my opinion is easily "Aloha Means I Love You". The "Ashmolean Marching Song" is, as the title suggests, a fast-tempo rumbustious student campus song. "Music of Home" is good but a trifle sententious, I feel. "Its a Good Day" is a good record.....

The real work Bing did with Thompson, however, remains the tremendous HOW THE WEST WAS WON. If any well-informed reader can tell us something of Bob it will be appreciated.

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So we come to Mishel Piastro: the musical director for the semi-private Longines Symphonette Record Society - associated of course with the famous time-keeping manufacturers and jewellers. Their name is prominent at, for instance, the Olympic Games! They have issued many "celebrity" collections and tremendous interest was aroused amongst Crosby admirers when it was announced in 1966 that "Bing Crosby's Golden Treasury of the Songs I Love", sub-titled "Bing Crosby's All-Time Hit Parade" was to be issued.

And that it would comprise of 84 of the greatest hits of all time, on six 12" albums. Now the knowing Crosby collector would almost certainly doubt that Bing, in 1965, would specially record such a number of songs again but there is no doubt at all that many people seeing this set advertised, and not unreasonably so, would think that that was the case. And they would, thereby, be in for a big disappointment.

While the songs are beautifully played and beautifully recorded they are mainly orchestral versions and Bing's contribution was quite sparse. In fact, it is possible that this dawned on the sponsors rather late in the day for much heart-burning was caused to purchasers of the set when it was speedily reissued with more vocals by Bing. In all cases, it is understood, the singing by Bing was dubbed on to the orchestral items. But having bought the expensive set once it was asking a lot to buy it again, desirable though this was in view of the extra Crosby vocals added.

The set was well-packaged and buyers also got an extra LP record of Bing singing more hit songs. But once again, little is known of Mishel Piastro who directed the orchestral accompaniment. It can be argued that the set is eminently worthwhile because of the quality of the orchestra and because of the nature of the songs - 84 of the biggest hits. Even so, it cannot be argued that it was the boon it seemed to be for Crosby collectors. The titles on which Bing did sing were as follows:

Stormy Weather.	My Prayer.
Always.	Amapola.
Ole Buttermilk Sky.	The Breeze and I.
Tenderly.	Rock-A-Bye Your Baby With A Dixie Melody.
Isn't This a Lovely Day.	South of the Border.
In The Chapel in the Moonlight.	I'll Take Romance.
Lonesome and Sorry.	When My Sugar Walks down the Street.
All Alone.	Coquette.

(The last four titles were on the "bonus" album issued with the set.)

The recordings were made on 30 November and 2 December, 1965.

I must confess the main thoughts ingendered in me by this set, or the vocals by Bing, are regret that he didn't record some of these wonderful songs at the time they were first published and when he was at the height of his career - numbers such as South of the Border, Chapel in the Moonlight and Stormy Weather.

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IT WILL BE CORDIALLY APPRECIATED IF THOSE MEMBERS RECEIVING A "SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER" WITH THIS ISSUE WILL RENEW PROMPTLY TO HELP ENSURE THE FUTURE OF THE ICC - AND ESPECIALLY OF ITS MAIN LINK BETWEEN MEMBERS, THIS MAG "BING".

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WE'RE DELIGHTED TO INTRODUCE MORE NEW MEMBERS, AMONG WHOM ARE - Mr. K.W.Atkins, Basildon, Essex - Mr. S.J.Austin, West Drayton, Midd'x - Kevin Anderson, California - Mrs. B. Bithrey, Enfield, Midd'x - Eric Crowden, Nottingham - Barry Freestone, Brixton Hill - Mrs. F. Hooley, Winchester - Mr. D.J.Hunt, Barnet, Herts - Mrs. G. Lambert, London, E7 - Susan Plant, Stoke-on-Trent - (Susan seems one of those very young Crosbyites!) - Ms. R. Van Lathem, Brussels - and Brian Walker, Knottingley, Yorks. We bid them welcome and trust they find BING what they are looking for - and look forward to hearing from them at any time.

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SEND IN YOUR BING CROSBY REQUEST TO YOUR FAVOURITE RADIO REQUEST PROGRAMME !

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KNOWING THAT READERS LIKE TO READ OTHER READERS THE REST OF THIS ISSUE IS DEVOTED TO MORE READERS' LETTERS

MORE READERS' LETTERS

G.A.Jones, 26 Dainton House, Brunel Estate, Gt. Western Rd. London, W.2: In my opinion, the best Road of them all - the Road to Recovery. That's the thankful news about Bing. Please find enclosed a reprint of a Bing radio venture in Oregon. You probably have heard of this from some of our American members. Anyway, I send it in case.

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And I'm glad Mr. Jones did send it for curiously no-one from the States has either sent it or even mentioned it. Entitled "The Crosby Years" it reveals that one John Salisbury in the States has embarked upon (and probably finished by now) no less than 41 one-hour long radio programmes with that title. This makes even the BBC's great effort look a little anaemic! I think it will be an excellent idea to reproduce this article in full in the next issue: meanwhile, here are some quotes from it:

> Bing, on his next birthday, will be around 70...he has already achieved his Golden Anniversary as a singer, actor and now legendary star.....he has conquered every medium of popular entertainment from recordings to movies to radio and television.. John Salisbury is director of news and special projects for KXL Radio in Portland and under that second category is currently producing a semo-documentary 41-week series of Sunday afternoon programmes called The Crosby Years...."I decided the direct approach was best, so I wrote to Bing saying what I proposed. His reply was immediate and positive: "Go ahead - let's do it! Bing's butler, Fisher, ushered me upstairs to the crooner's study....there are more collections of the works of Crosby than of any other popular artist in the world.....among such collectors can be found men and women from all walks of life.....some of them are professional broadcasters like Jack Souther of San Francisco....there are those who claim the truly dedicated Crosby collector does not exist anywhere in the States as he does among the dykes of Holland, the churches of Belgium, the rolling hills of England, and in the great open spaces of the Australian outback.....

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Giles Brissonneau, 9 Allee du Mt. Des Rossignols 33120, Arcachon, France: I've bought two old albums of Bing's on Ace of Hearts, Bing the Early 30's 1930-31 and Vol. 2...Two very good albums and Bing in these albums sings many lovely tunes of those times. And I've heard with attention "George White's Scandals" with Victor Young's Orchestra; this is a rare collection of recordings made by Bing and many other artists such as the charming Boswell Sisters in the jazz tune "This is the Missus", "That's Love", and "Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries - Bing, Connie Boswell and the Mills Brothers. On the middle of this recording we can hear a delightful vocalist, a beautiful voice, Frank Munn in "My Song". Who IS Ffank Munn? Is a friend of Bing? What a wonderful vocalist he is. Have you heard the record? Now many questions - a friend of me, a Bing Crosby lover, have said to me that Bing have recorded with Ben Selvin's orchestra during the end of 1933. Is it true? and if this is true, what record. I've not seen Crosby's recording with Selvin.. answer to me please! For the next summer holidays I shall go in United States and particularly in Williamstown at the "Paul Whiteman's Museum". Do you know the Paul Whiteman's museum? For finish, do you know the address of Bing. I should like to write a letter for him.

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I've printed Giles's letter in much the way he wrote it; his English is good but has the usual French overtones! Questions to answer for Giles: No, I did not even know there was a Whiteman Museum.....Frank Munn? A radio tenor of the time, but know nothing else of him. Glad that Giles has managed to get those two Ace of Hearts, familiar to all of us over here....

Bing's address is: 170 North Boulevard Avenue, Beverley Hills, California, 90211, USA.

Ben Selvin? He does not appear on any of Bing's records, but on the other hand, this does not entirely rule him out as a Crosby accompanist. He is generally claimed to have made more records than any other bandleader, BUT he used so many different names, and was responsible for different orchestra - something like an agency - that it is just possible Bing did record with Ben Selvin. But there's no real way of finding out for certain now. Giles would be thrilled to hear from Whiteman/Crosby fans.....